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Take it from someone who has been in motorsports for over 25 years, Restore's new "2 IN 1" says what it does and does what it says. For improved performance look for Restore's "2 IN 1" at leading automotive retailers.



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CAMERA IMAGE: ANDY PEARLMAN; LENSE IMAGE: JON ABEYTA

NBA: NO BASKETS ALLOWED

Look for the famished NBA to feast on a rare bounty of points in this year's All-Star game, which will feature, as always, little defense and lots of players desiring to launch the basketball.

Then, after letting out a notch or two on its collective belt and enjoying the afternoon, the NBA will return to the less-satiating regular season.

Despite the league's efforts of the past few years, which have included the elimination of hand-checking, scoring this year is down even from last, when the average number of points per game dropped below 100 for the first time since the 1950s. Sixteen teams in 1995-96 averaged less than 100, and only one—the Bulls—poured in more than 105. Just three seasons earlier, 15 teams averaged 105 and only two couldn't muster 100. Four seasons before that, in '88-89, the first of two years of expansion, nine teams averaged 110.

So what's the deal? Yes, teams are taking less shots, but isn't that a symptom rather than a reason?

"My own theory about the decrease in scoring is that teams have really become better defensively," says Milwaukee's Vin Baker. "The fact that the Bulls and the Sonics are such great defensive teams—teams are trying to pattern themselves in the same way defensively."

The Bulls' Steve Kerr dissents, introducing a two-part theory:

1. The league has fewer up-tempo coaches—like Doug Moe, Allan Bristow and Paul Westhead—manning teams. "Those guys are gone, and they're being replaced by guys who were emulating more of the Pat Riley style of play, which emphasizes slowing the ball down quite a bit and not giving up any easy baskets," says Kerr.

2. Familiarity. "It's so predictable now," says Kerr. "It's two-on-two and the other three guys stand on the other side. Then screen-and-rolls, post up and wait for the double-team, kick out...it's so mundane and teams are so familiar with each other, there's not a lot of variety."

To summarize:

"Having good defenders is a large part of the lower scoring," insists Baker.

Not so, says Kerr: "Really, I think the low scores are much more a case of bad offense than great defense."

This much we can agree on: It's not much fun to watch.

—Paul M. Johnson

IN&OUT

IN: Tiger Woods (pictured)

OUT: Detroit Tigers

IN: Pro Bowl

OUT: Pro bowling

IN: Atlanta Braves
stability

OUT: Cleveland Indians
dismantling

IN: Martina Hingis

OUT: Jennifer Capriati

IN: The WAC

OUT: The Big East

IN: Boxing

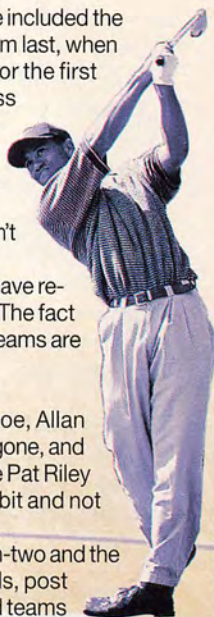
OUT: Wrestling (WWF-style)

IN: Chamique Holdsclaw

OUT: The ABL

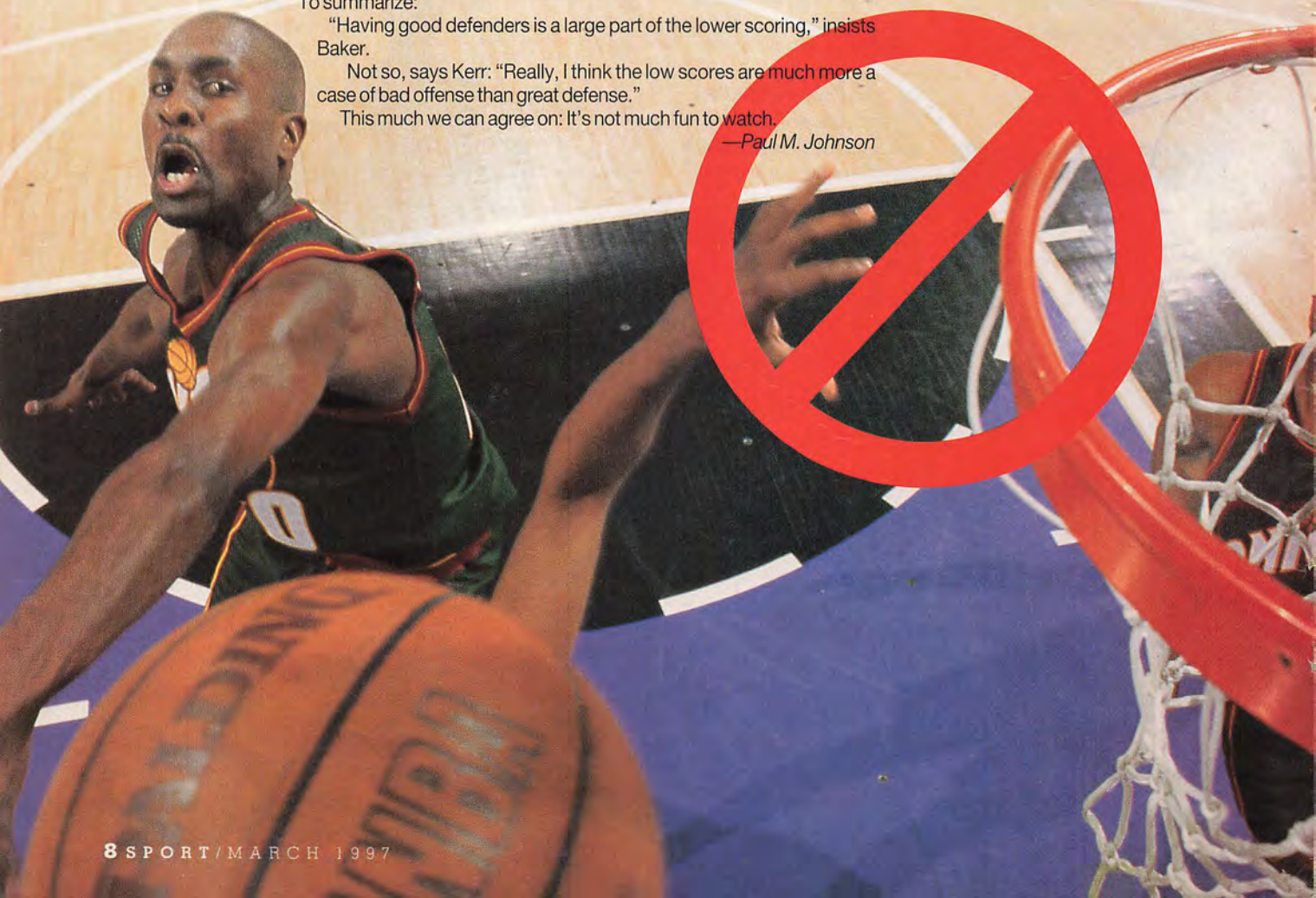
IN: Great NBA teams

OUT: Parity



MITCHELL HADDAD

ROCKY WIDNER

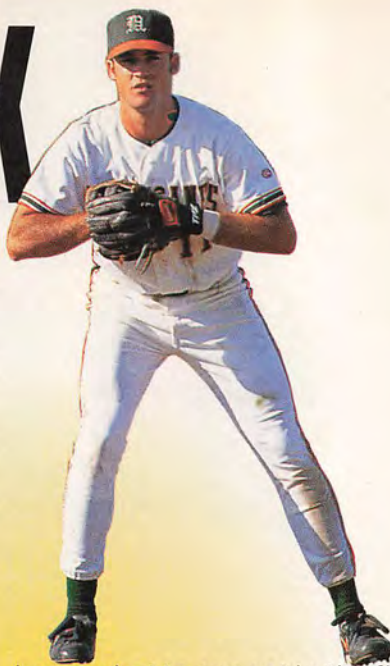


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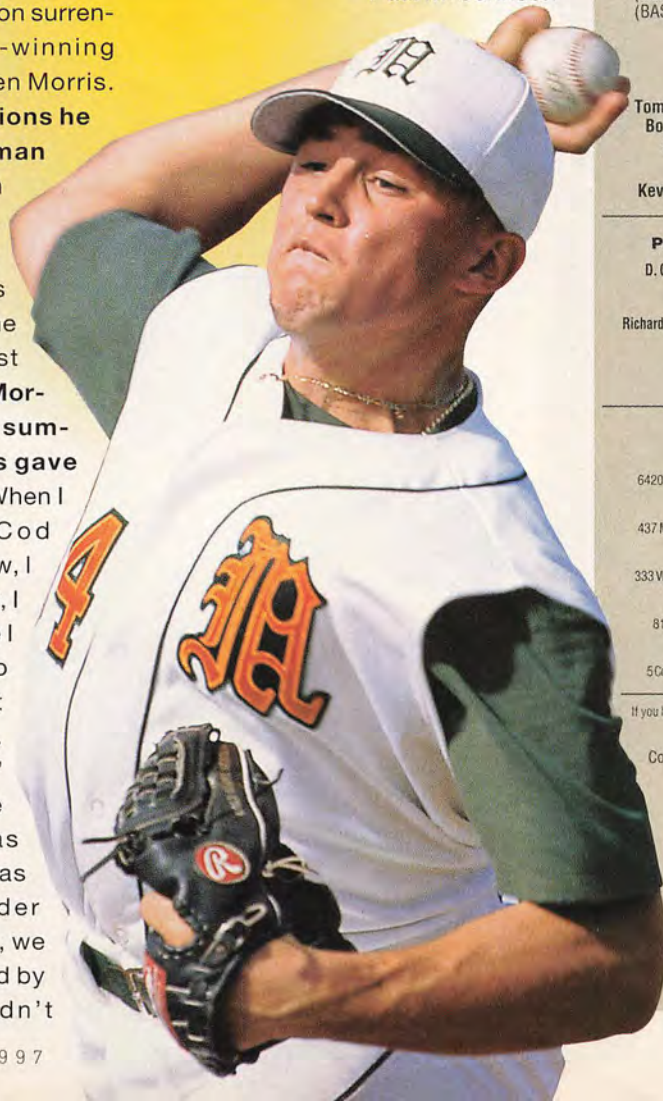
Who: University of Miami sophomore standouts Pat Burrell and Robbie Morrison. Burrell, a third baseman, led the nation in hitting (.484) and slugging (.948), collected 23 homers and 64 RBI, and was named MVP of both the Central I Regional and the College World Series. Morrison, the club's closer, finished second in the nation with 14 saves and was 4-2 with a 1.68 ERA and 88 strikeouts in 59 innings. **What:** The beginning of the 1997 college baseball season. The expectations are lofty for the Hurricanes, who were one out away from winning last year's CWS before Morrison surrendered a championship-winning home run to LSU's Warren Morris.

Burrell on the expectations he had entering his freshman season: "I wasn't even sure if I was going to be one of the guys who was going to play a lot. As things developed, I got the starting job. It kind of just snowballed from there." **Morrison on the trash-talk summer-league opponents gave him in the off-season:** "When I first got to the Cape Cod League, the first ball I threw, I heard it. From there on out, I heard it almost every time I pitched. I realized I had to deal with it and I'll hear it until the end of next year. So I've got to let it go."

Burrell on the way the Series was lost: "It was pretty bad. I assume it was much worse for the older guys. For Robbie and me, we were just so overwhelmed by being there that we didn't

know what to expect in the first place." **Morrison on this season's No. 1 objective:** "To win that thing—the national championship. Get that ring, win it all. Not just for me, but for the coaches, our team."

—Paul M. Johnson



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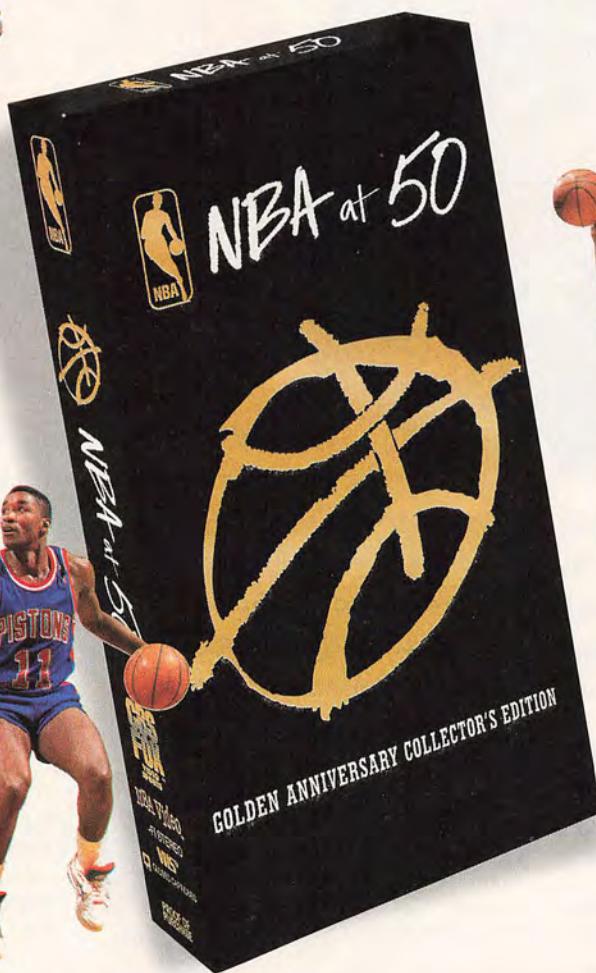
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KEEPING UP WITH JONES

In what has become as much a fall tradition as the World Series—and lately even more reliable—the Los Angeles Dodgers in 1996 were awarded yet another Rookie of the Year winner, Todd Hollandsworth. That makes it an unprecedented five straight reigning Dodger rookies, a staggering achievement when one considers the mathematical chances of a National League team having accomplished the feat: 1 in 395,136.

Eric Karros won the award in 1992, Mike Piazza in '93, Raul Mondesi in '94, Hideo Nomo in '95 and Hollandsworth last season. That's half the club's everyday lineup and the ace of the pitching staff.

Alas, the '96 Olympics hoopla has died down and Kerri Strug has become an average citizen again.

Well, at least from her point of view: She's a full-time student at UCLA who lives a normal life within the friendly confines of Westwood, only becoming larger than life on weekends when she headlines the Ice Capades' "The Magic of MGM" and World Gold Gymnastic tours.

"Prior to Atlanta, gymnastics was my whole life, so now it's really nice to experience other fun things too," says Strug, taking a break from the tours, which also feature such marquee names as Nadia Comaneci, Bart Conner, Rocky Balboa and the Pink Panther.

Admittedly, Strug didn't instantly cap-

"For them to come up with that much talent in one decade is astounding," says ESPN analyst Peter Gammons.

Who's next?

"I'd say Karim Garcia has the best chance," says Gammons of the sweet-swinging *Sporting News* 1995 Minor League Player of the Year who could open the season as the

that the departed Delino DeShields couldn't: second base and leadoff hitter.

So who'll win it, Garcia or Guerrero?

Neither, says Gammons, who is quick to point out that the Atlanta Braves' Andruw Jones, already a World Series hero at age 19, will qual-

ify and be a solid front-runner to win the '97 rookie award.

Still, no one can take away the club's rookie run, a remarkable credit to the organization....Or is it?

"Their farm system is always

one of the best in baseball, but there is luck involved in that the Dodgers get a lot of publicity," Gammons says. "It's a lot easier for a Todd Hollandsworth to win it than for a Jason Kendall or an Edgar Renteria because of that publicity. The Dodgers are very good about promoting their players."

—Steve Gordon

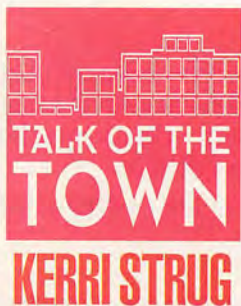
be a terrific player."

Another candidate is fleet-footed Wilton Guerrero, who batted .344 at Triple-A Albuquerque last season with 79 runs and 26 stolen bases. The Dodgers may rely on Guerrero to fill two needs

TOM DIPACE



Dodgers' left fielder.



ture America's bankbook the way Mary Lou Retton did, but the 4-9 Strug has proven that, in small doses, her fame's flame can still burn.

A children's book (*Heart of Gold*) is out, while another book and a made-for-TV movie are in the works. So, too, are the tours. "Combining that with school keeps her plate full," says her agent, Leigh Steinberg, himself the subject of the recently released movie *Jerry Maguire*, starring Tom Cruise.

Her mom, Melanie, always at Kerri's side, points out, "We really

wanted Kerri to be identified with just the things that she enjoys."

And Strug loves the entertainment industry, excitedly telling the story of how her parents took her, along with her brother and sister, to the movies every Sunday, giving the young gymnast a much-anticipated break from her hectic schedule.

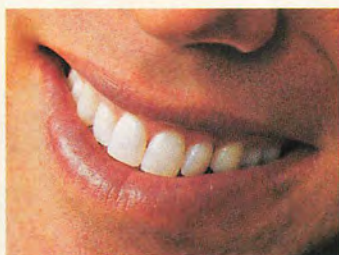
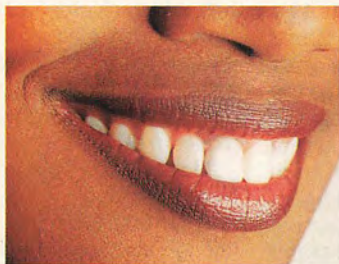
That's why Strug is linked with Hollywood-connected agencies like Steinberg's. Like MGM. Like International Creative Management.

"I'm headed in that direction, but I don't want to run before I walk," says the 19-year-old gold medalist. "I just want to see how I enjoy the experience, and if I like it and feel it's for me, then I'll definitely get involved."

—Darryl Howerton



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BOOK REVIEW

OLYMPIC WINNER

Atlanta 1996, The Official Commemorative Book Of The Centennial Olympic Games, USA Edition (Woodford Press, 208 pages, \$35.95 hardcover, \$25.95 soft-cover).

A picture is worth a thousand words. Especially when it comes to the Olympics.

Thrills and chills unfold in dramatic detail. The book documents the Games from the pageantry of opening day to closing ceremonies.

Reader-friendly, *Atlanta 1996* offers the perfect blend of artwork and tight copy, arrayed in short paragraphs. Every page presents at least one full-frame, high-

action photograph to reel in the reader.

At the beginning of the book is an alphabetical listing of American athletes who participated in the Games. The reader is then treated to a pictorial walk-through of Atlanta, the host city.



Sixteen pages of coverage are devoted to U.S. athletes alone, launched by "The American Spirit," a foreword written by former Olympian Bruce Jenner. Jenner poignantly recites the intangibles of being an Olympian, through the experiences of such notables as Andre Agassi,

who had tears streaming down his cheeks as he stood on the medal stand waiting to accept the gold after playing one of the most exciting matches in tennis

sporttalk

history. Then there's more of America's best: gymnast Kerri Strug's gallant stand on the balance beam, Charles Barkley and the Dream Team's dominance in basketball, and track star Carl Lewis winning his ninth Olympic gold.

Also integral to *Atlanta 1996* is a "Facts and Figures" section that gives the skinny on every athlete and his or her performance in each of the sports, augmented by a "Medals Table" showing the bounty won by each country.

The 100th Olympics are worth remembering. This book is the perfect way to keep the spirit of the Games alive.

—Raymond Harper

LET THE BIG GUYS TALK SPORTS

Interleague play has arrived. Is it good for baseball? Dr. Frapperton and Larry The Big Man discuss.

Frapperton: I'm too sexy for my clothes, too sexy for my clothes, too sexy for clothes.

Big Man: Let's talk about interleague play.

Frapperton: Too sexy for my shirt, too sexy for my shirt.

Big Man: Myron, get on the subject!

Frapperton: Interleague play. Big mistake. Another misguided move by baseball.

Big Man: Discuss.

Frapperton: I'm a traditionalist. I like green grass and dirt infields. I like pitchers that hit. I like playoffs without wild cards. I like the warm sun on my face. I like a lazy afternoon nap. I like Jell-O without fruit.

Big Man: But do you like interleague play?

Frapperton: Don't you get it, Big Man? I'm a romantic. I hate interleague play. It was baseball's last great tradition and they scrubbed it.

Big Man: Oh, stop all that weepy sentiment. Think I'll heave.

Frapperton: [Sobbing] You heretic! O' baseball, fair baseball! I will die a thousand deaths should the Mariners ever face the Astros! Oh, father, what would Michael Cage think?

Big Man: He'd think you've wiggled, Dog. You've never been the same since those kids stole your Ed Asner poster.

Frapperton: [With resignation] 'Tis true. 'Tis true, old boy.

Big Man: There's no downside to interleague play that I can see. All these great rivalries will form: the Mets-Yankees, Dodgers-Angels, Giants-A's. Cubs-White Sox. Baseball needed this badly.

Frapperton: But what of the All-Star game? What of purity? What of love?

Big Man: I can't get that damn chorus out of my head. Too sexy for my shirt, too sexy for my shirt.

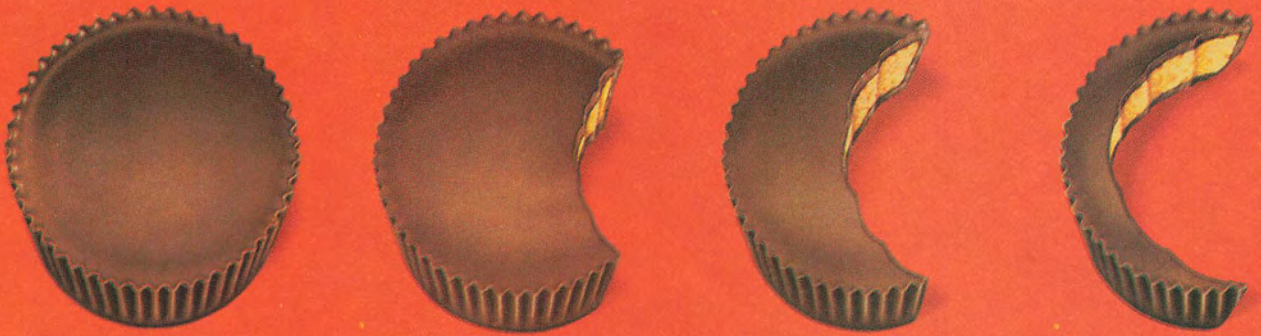
Frapperton: The All-Star game will lose its luster, the anticipation drained from it like water from...well, like when you put maybe spaghetti in a colander and the water runs out so the spaghetti is dry and then you can eat. Like that.

Big Man: How poetic. The All-Star game will survive just fine. Fan interest will skyrocket because of interleague play. Some traditions don't merit preserving. Nothing was ever gained by prohibiting interleague play.

Frapperton: First it was the wild card, now interleague play, next will be aluminum bats. I cannot say at this hour, Lawrence, what will become of the game. O, I can no longer speak.

Big Man: Thank God for that.

E-mail Dr. Frapperton at Frapperton@aol.com and Larry The Big Man at LryThBigMn@aol.com



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(RICHARD CHANDLER, ASTRONOMER)

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ROD "I wish I'd kept my
mouth shut a little
more" By Rick Weinberg
STRICKLAND

AT THE LOYOLA MARYMOUNT GYM IN LOS ANGELES, THE clock on the wall reads 11:15 a.m. As Rod Strickland glances up to check the time with his tired eyes prior to a late-morning workout, he ponders the mistakes he's made during his NBA career.

"I wish I'd kept my mouth shut a little more," says the 30-year-old Strickland, the Washington Bullets' underrated point guard. "I've thought about it many times—that if I kept quiet and waited for my time to come, I'd probably still be a New York Knick. Now I realize how nice it would've been to play in one city for one team in one uniform. To play in one place and have the opportunity to win a championship there and to stamp your name in the team record book by setting a bunch of records. I would've liked that. Now I'll never get that chance."

Traded by the Portland Trail Blazers to the Bullets last July, Strickland hopes D.C. is the last stop on his dizzying tour of NBA cities. He hopes that with young stars Juwan Howard and Chris Webber to feed in the post, his fortunes will begin

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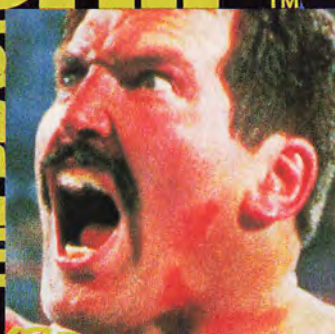
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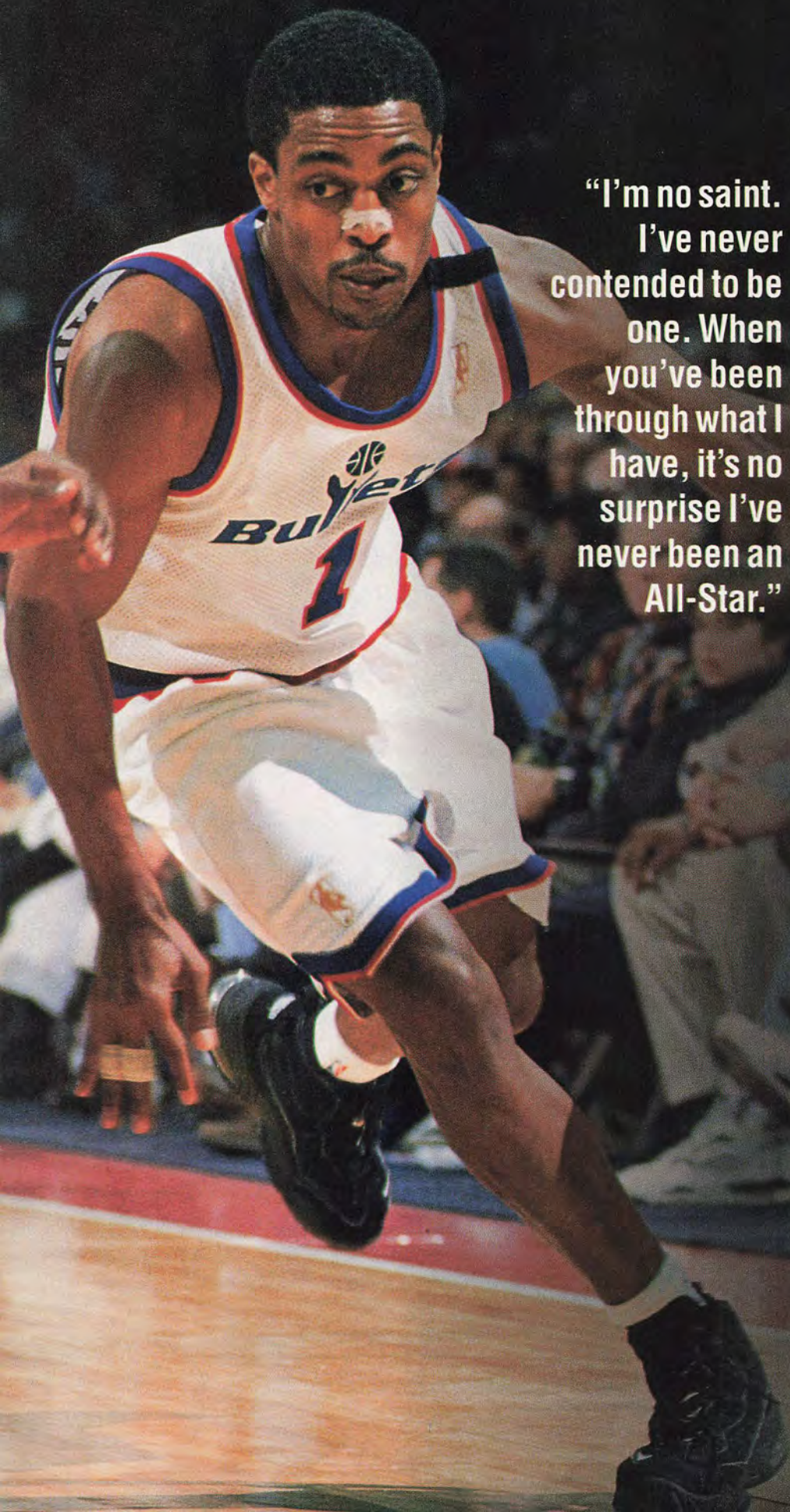
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"I'm no saint. I've never contended to be one. When you've been through what I have, it's no surprise I've never been an All-Star."

to turn.

"I'm counting on being in Washington for four, five years," says Strickland, cutting into a piece of fruit. "But you never know. This is a cut-throat business, and with the way things have gone in my career, my mind-set is that I could be somewhere else in two seasons."

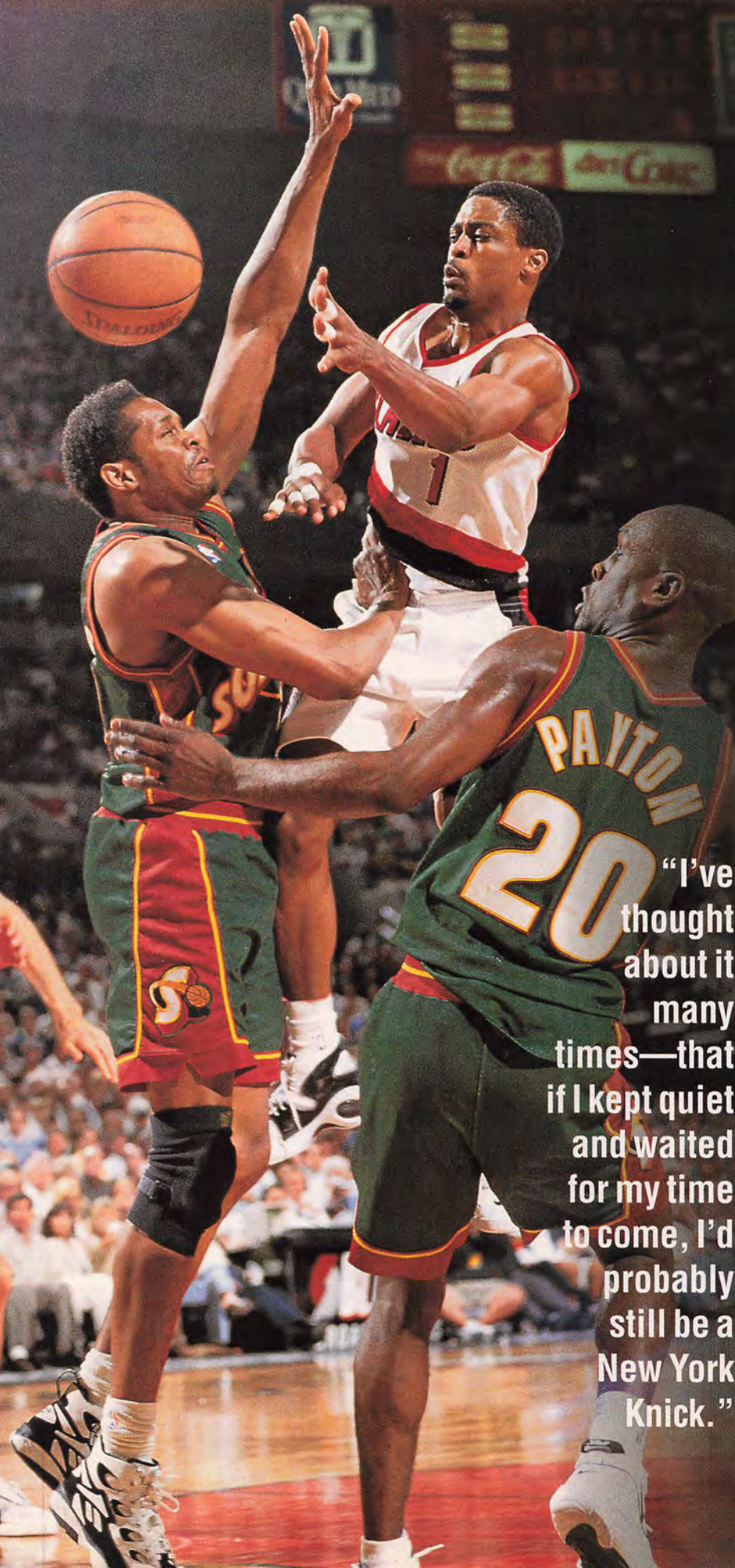
Two seasons was the approximate tenure of each of his first two NBA stops, New York and San Antonio. Though Mark Jackson was fresh off a Rookie of the Year season as the Knicks' starting point guard, Strickland complained that then-coach Rick Pitino wasn't playing him enough and demanded a trade. New York obliged, sending him to the Spurs. "Worst mistake I made," Strickland says. "San Antonio was a nightmare."

He was a Spur for only 146 games before the team let him go as a free agent in 1992. A contract holdout during his last year helped lead to the departure. Then the Blazers took a chance on him, and during his first two years with the team, Strickland flourished under coach Rick Adelman, racking up impressive numbers. During the 1993-94 season, Strickland led the Blazers in assists, steals and minutes played and was voted the team's MVP.

But Adelman was fired after that season, replaced by P.J. Carlesimo, who became Strickland's daily sparring partner. Strickland detests Carlesimo. His facial expressions say as much. So do his words.

"I don't like the man, period. I loved playing for Rick. Loved him as a coach and human being. If Rick hadn't been fired, I'd still be in Portland. [Bullets coach] Jim Lynam is a lot like Rick, so that gives me a good feeling about Washington. He treats you with respect. Treats you like a man, unlike some coaches."

And unlike some players of



similar talent, Strickland has yet to be treated to an All-Star game.

"He's the best player in the NBA who's never made the All-Star team," says Howard. "I can't believe he's never been an All-Star. That's a joke."

How can a guy average 18 points and nine assists the last three seasons and not be invited to the midseason classic? Strickland ponders the question while chewing on a piece of orange.

"I think it goes back to the fact that I've been controversial. I'm no saint. I've never contended to be one. When you've been through what I have, it's no surprise I've never been an All-Star."

He's certainly capable of such status. After all, this is a guy who averaged 23.3 points and 12.3 assists in the playoffs two years ago. Last season, he finished fourth in the league in assists at 9.6 a game, to go along with an 18.7 scoring average.

"He's exceptional, and it amazes me that he doesn't get enough attention or respect," says Sonics point guard Gary Payton. "But believe me, every player in the league knows how great Rod Strickland is. He just kills you in so many ways. He can explode to the hoop and dunk, or he can just stick it from the outside. He's an exceptional passer, and he's probably the best rebounding point guard in the league.... Now that he's with guys like Chris Webber and Juwan Howard, I think you're going to see the best of Rod Strickland."

Strickland polishes off the orange and wipes his fingers. He notices a small stain on his T-shirt, which has a "Phat Farm" emblem. "You know what it means?" he asks, pointing to the emblem. "In the 'hood, 'phat' means it's nice, it's good." He pauses for a moment, then smiles. "I can only hope that's the way things go for me here with the Bullets." ★

"I've thought about it many times—that if I kept quiet and waited for my time to come, I'd probably still be a New York Knick."

The first question, perhaps the simplest, was answered a scant two hours and 26 minutes into the 1996-97 NBA season: Allen Iverson could score. Thirty points in an eight-point opening-night loss to the Milwaukee Bucks.

With the help of each weapon afforded his sweeping arsenal, the Philadelphia 76ers' No. 1 pick cultivated open looks in every way thinkable. He wriggled his spindly, barely-6-foot body free of double-teams. He deked his man into lunging at the bait of a shoulder-high crossover dribble. He froze defenders by glancing downcourt for an unlikely pass, using the instant to flit by unhindered, save for a futile clutch of his flapping jersey. He poured in 12 of 19 shots from the field, two of four from beyond the arc.

He answered.

But for the smallest first-overall draft pick in NBA history, the bigger questions await. That Iverson's nickname is and has been "The Answer"—it's tattooed on his left arm—proved plain enough for Reebok, who gave the 21-year-old a \$40 million contract to wear its products and hand them out to all his friends. Reebok named the first shoe in the Allen Iverson marketing phase "The Question."

For the time being, Iverson seemingly has answered the Sixers' prayers. That's not to say there aren't other questions hanging over the point guard's head.

Will Iverson alter—either by self-motivation or by Sixers demand—his jack-it-up-first style of point guard play for the sake of the team?

Iverson should just as soon develop a set-shot to complement his scoop-shot. Bob Cousy was never met in pregame introductions by a Broadway-sized spotlight and "y'all ready for this?!" and Allen Iverson won't be passing first and shooting second either.

"Point guards can do so many things," says Iverson. "They can get others involved, they can get themselves involved. You add a lot to a team if you're a point guard and you can score too. Of course you can pass the ball, hit people, get people open, but if they're worrying about your scoring ability as well, that makes you that much stronger."

One joke that made the rounds was that Iverson, who was Virginia's high school football player of the year, gave up a career as a quarterback to become a point guard because it didn't involve as much passing. His detractors felt he had no understanding of teamwork and noted that the NBA neophyte tossed up 23 shots per game in last summer's pro league. Then, to start the exhibition season, he managed only 15 assists in his first five games. He had a nasty habit of leaving the floor—oftentimes amid traffic—with no plan, which led to turnovers. No one could possibly introduce the notion of pass-first to Iverson at this point of his basketball education. His hoops existence is driven by a need to put the ball through the net.

"I like to score," says a simplistic Iverson. "That's just something I was born with. God gave me the ability to put the ball in the hoop. That's what I do. Even if I played with guys like Michael [Jordan] and Scottie [Pippen], I would still shoot the ball. I don't know if I would shoot it as much, but I would still shoot it."

Iverson thinks on it.... "I might even shoot it a little more because a lot of the attention would be off me."

How will he take to the freedom of life as an NBA player?

Iverson perhaps will never escape the dogged doubts

A 76ers Franchise Long on Questions and Short on Wins Hopes Allen Iverson Will Prove To Be ...

of those who have followed his career. Most of these doubts stem from a national attention-drawing incident during Iverson's senior year of high school. It was Feb. 13, 1993, and Iverson was at a Hampton, Va., bowling alley with friends. Reportedly, someone called someone else a "nigger," and a brawl ensued. Iverson was in the middle of it and arrested, along with three other black men.

Although he still maintains that he didn't hit anyone, Iverson in July of that year was convicted and sentenced to 15 years, 10 of them suspended, and sent to a juvenile work farm. As his appeals were pending, Iverson was granted conditional clemency by then-governor of Virginia Douglas Wilder. In June of 1995, his conviction was overturned completely.

But his dreams of playing both basketball and football, his first love ("I never could have imagined I'd be playing basketball right now instead of football," he says), at the University of Kentucky were quashed. Only until John Thompson gave him the opportunity at Georgetown did his basketball career right itself. Thompson's offer infuriated some and greatly benefited Iverson.

"He taught me a lot of things: how to deal with people, how to deal with different situations, always think 'life first' before anything," says Iverson, who averaged 23 points, 4.6 assists and 3.2 steals per game over his two seasons at Georgetown. "It



JON SCOTCHDO

By Paul M. Johnson



made me feel good that he was comfortable with me. He always said he was comfortable with me on the basketball court, but he felt comfortable with me off the court as well. That meant a lot to me."

"It was good for me because Coach let me live," Iverson adds. "Everybody said different things about me before I got there, that I was going to be a troublemaker. But when I got there, Coach Thompson treated me like he treated everybody else. He might even have given me a little more freedom because that's the type of person I am. I'll do what I'm supposed to do, but just leave me alone and I'll get it done. Don't be scared of me or anything or think that I'm not going to do what I gotta do just because you give me freedom."

How will the playground-type skills and savvy transfer to the NBA hardwood?

Iverson's court assets are each acoutrements of youth and speed: the crossover, the rise to the bucket, the explosive quickness. NBA director of scouting Marty Blake says Iverson's the fastest he's seen in his 45-year affiliation with the league. It helped on the playground and it's making his game in the pros.

No one has proven he can stick with Iverson, who averaged 30.5 points in two November games against the Knicks, fouling out three guards in the process. He stung another quick guard, Toronto's Damon Stoudamire, for 24 points on the second night of back-to-back Sixers road games.

"I think speed is everything," says Iverson, who also boasts a 40½-inch vertical leap. "As long as you're faster than somebody else or just as fast, you can pretty much do what you want."

"If you can go by guys in this league, you can make things happen, break a defense down. Somebody has to help, and whoever helps, then that's the guy you hit. And if they don't help, you got a bucket."

"On defense, you definitely need speed because everybody else is so quick, fast," the two-time Big East Defensive Player of the Year continues. "It's not like college, where you run into a point guard who is OK every once in a while. Every night, you're up against one of the best point guards."

Iverson, whose crossover dribble has been called the best in basketball and already has prompted a league memo, admits that he takes his old playground game into each NBA arena.

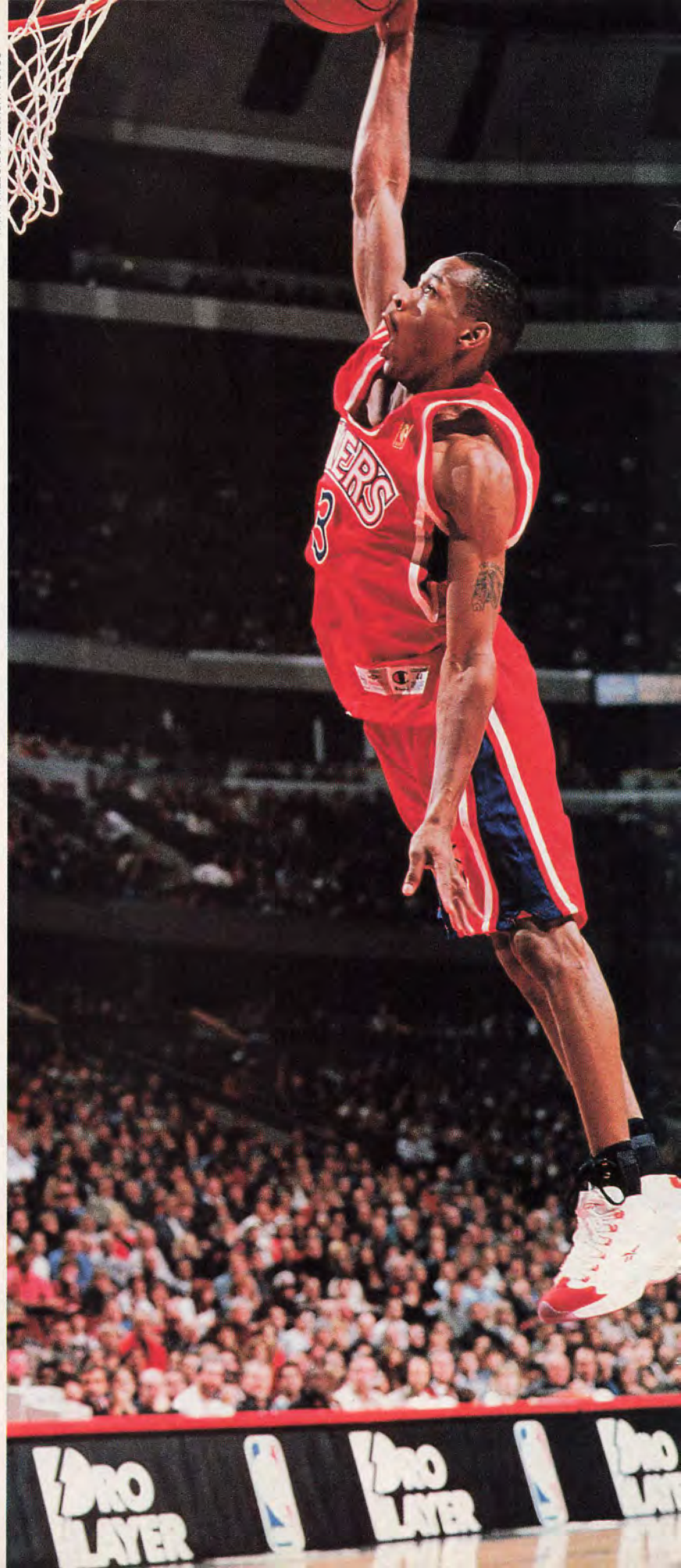
"Everything. Every last bit," he says. "Because you never know when you have to use something that you used in the street. There's different situations. Defenders make you do things, and a lot of times I do things on instinct. It don't matter what game I'm in, if it's a move I know how to do and I mostly do it on the playground and a defender makes me do it, then I do it—regardless of what it is. So I take everything I learned from the streets and put it in my NBA game."

How will he handle the pressure of being the top pick of an organization in desperate search of wins and an identity?

The 76ers have been miserable for a few years, but this season, with Iverson, they're much less mis-

A proven scorer, the springy Iverson says he doesn't have to answer to critics who want him to pass first.

NATHANIEL S. BUTLER/NBA PHOTOS





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JOHN SOOHOE

erable. Philadelphia went from 24 wins in 1994-95 to 18 last year, despite the addition of No. 2 pick Jerry Stackhouse and his 19.2 points. The wins have come easier this season.

What Iverson and Stackhouse provide the Sixers is stability at guard. For Philly, 1996-97 marks what surely will be the last of five straight seasons with a different guard tandem. (For trivia's sake, Jeff Hornacek and Hersey Hawkins were the last pair to stick.) Last season, the team used eight players at the point, making obvious a call on draft day between two points, Georgia Tech's Stephon Marbury and Iverson.

Ever since Iverson touched the floor opening night and hung that 30 on Milwaukee, he's shown that his selection by Philly was a no-brainer. The top pick of the draft is supposed to turn around a franchise, but by no means is it automatic. Iverson can ask teammate Derrick Coleman, the New Jersey Nets' first-overall pick in 1990. And it hasn't been automatic for the Milwaukee Bucks, whose first-overall pick in 1994, Glenn Robinson, has had to feel the heat of being selected ahead of Grant Hill and Jason Kidd in that draft.

"I wanted to be the top pick," says Iverson, who prior to the draft worked out exclusively for the Sixers. "I don't really feel no pressure. I've been dealing with things way worse than this. You know, this is no pressure. This is something I like to do."

Asked about goals, Iverson gets dreamy. "The sky's the limit," he says. "I want to make it to the playoffs. If I could, I would love to go play for the championship. I would love to be the Rookie of the Year. I think if I play the way I'm capable of playing, all those dreams will come true."

Iverson quickly answered most of the critics with his play, but he's still a bit of an enigma; incidents seem to litter behind him. He missed a day and a half of rookie orientation during the summer, offering up no excuse or even reason, but was later contrite about it. After being force-fed advice from the Bulls' Scottie Pippen and Dennis Rodman about the fine art of passing in the middle of an early-season matchup, Iverson brushed off Michael Jordan, who had come to offer postgame encouragement. Iverson was held out of the fourth quarter of an early-season game against Vancouver because he wasn't playing both ends of the court, again apologizing and saying he had a lot to learn.

Every minute episode stays with Iverson due to his past. It is something that will likely continue over the course of his career. At 21, he seems already to have tired of the constant attention, the ubiquitous criticism.

"I can do what I want to do," he says. "And that's what I think people should be able to do in this world—whatever they want to do. I mean, that's my job. If I go to work every day when I'm supposed to and take care of whatever I have to take care of on that court, then once I leave the gym, it's my life. I can pretty much do what I want to do." ★

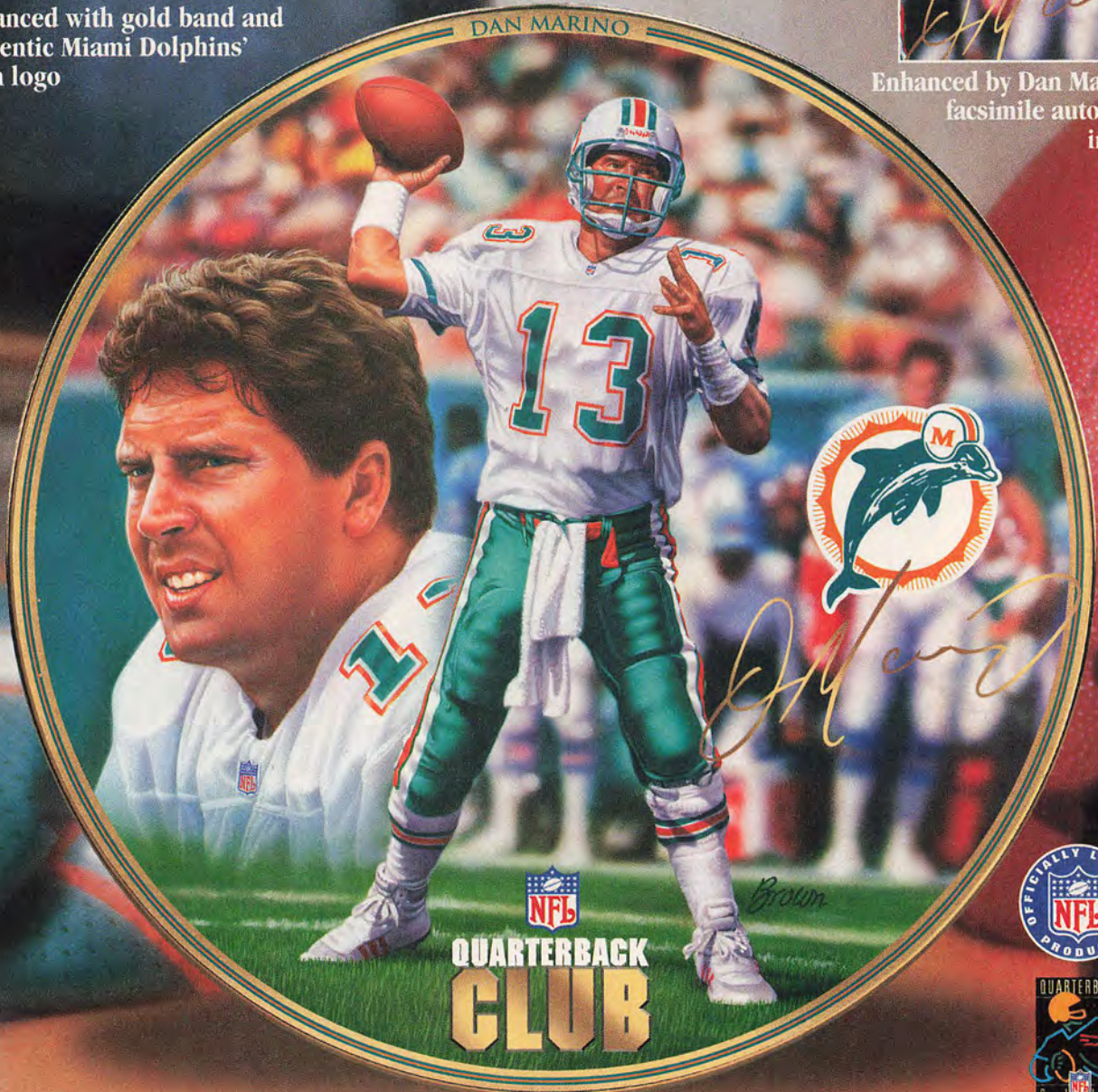
A bad-boy reputation precedes him, but The Answer has left few questions about his explosive game.

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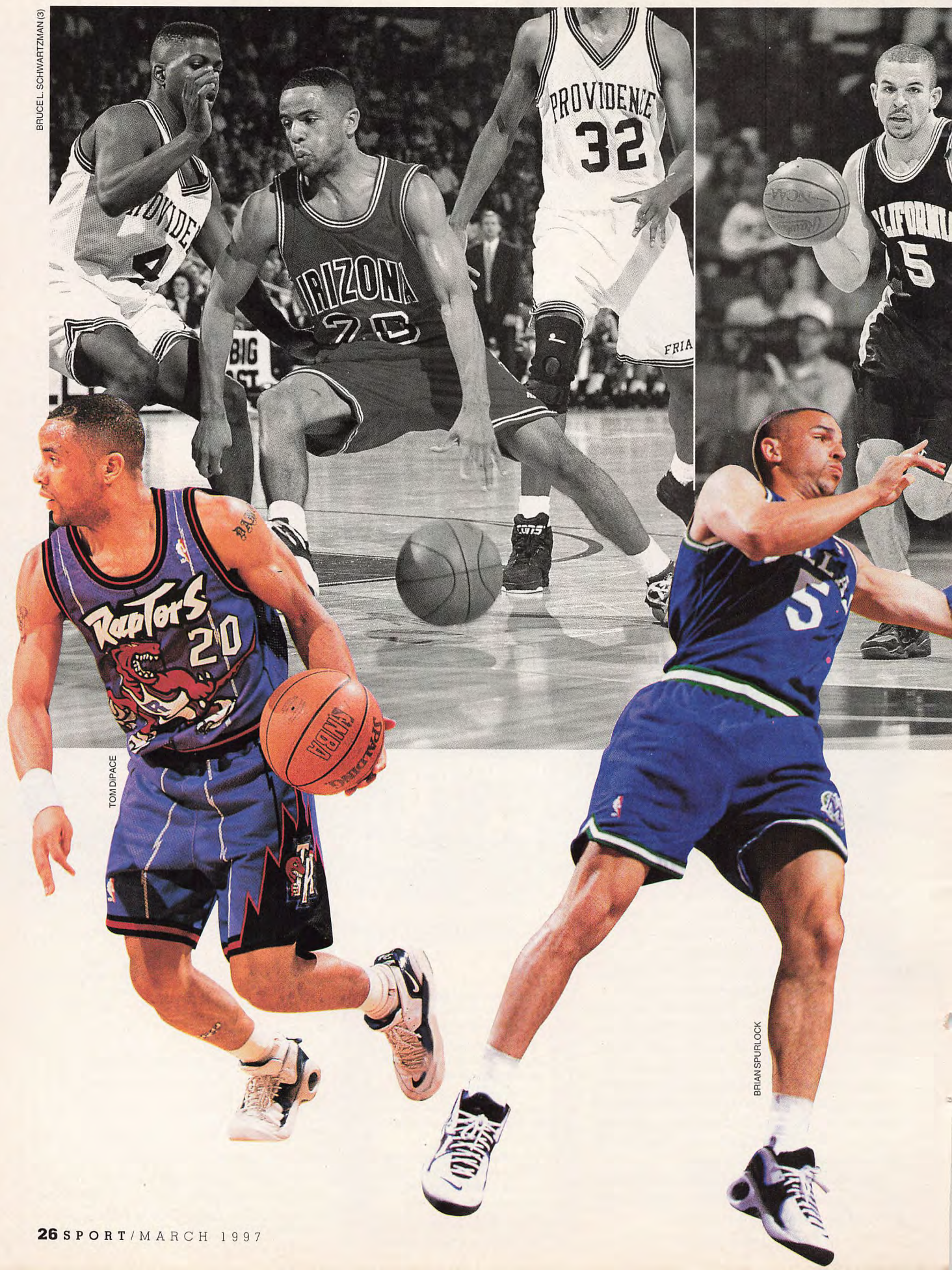
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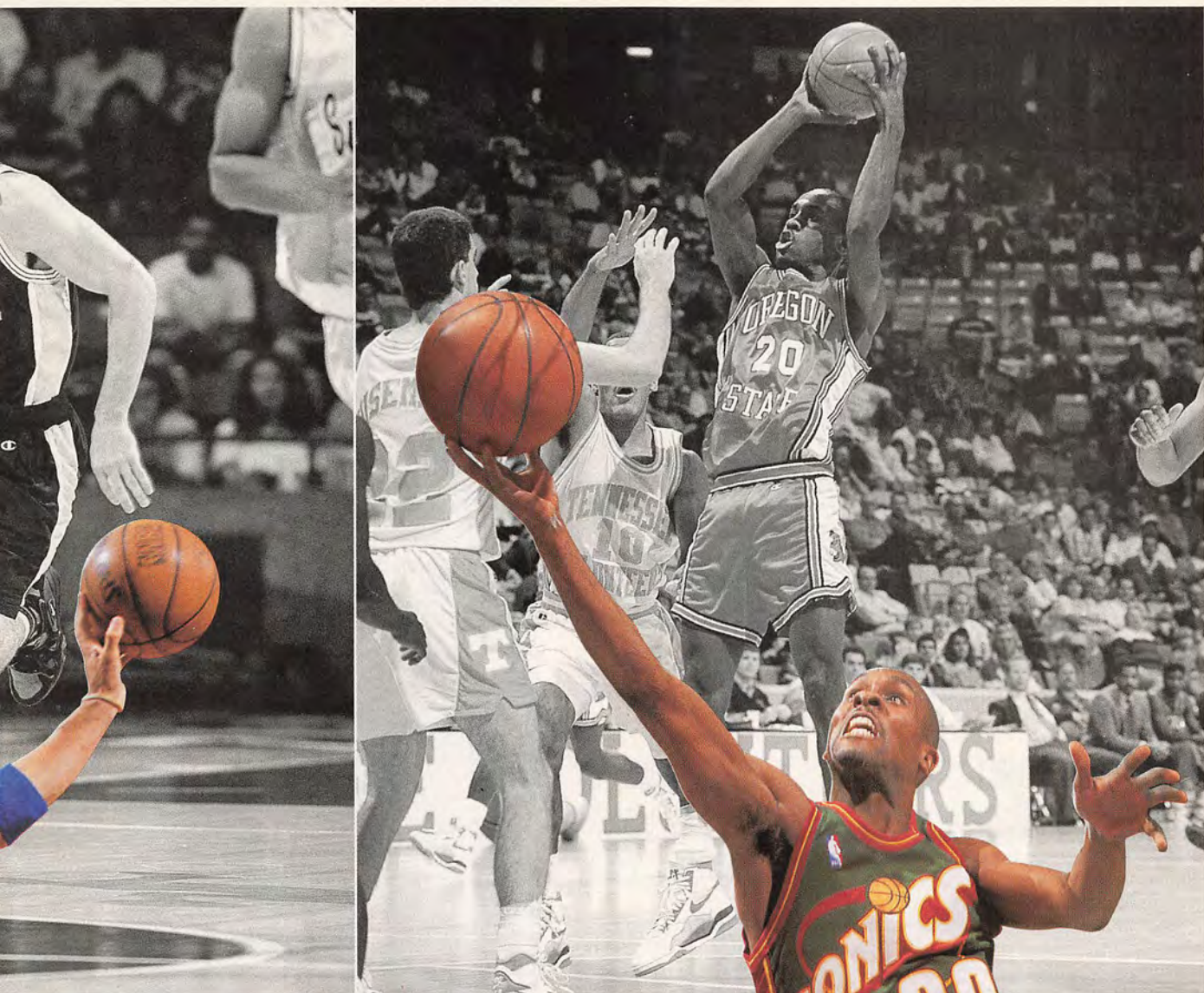
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**FORMER
PAC-10
POINT
GUARDS ARE
RUNNING
THE NBA**

By Paul
Feinberg

REMEMBER THE ALAMODOME? IN THE '96 ALL-STAR game, Michael Jordan (naturally) led the East to a 129-118 win. Off the bench, Cleveland's Terrell Brandon chipped in 11 points and three assists. For the West, Dallas' Jason Kidd ran the point, with Seattle's Gary Payton backing him up. The pair combined for 25 points and 15 assists.

A few months later, in the Western Conference finals, the SuperSonics defeated Utah in seven tough games. One reason Seattle prevailed was its edge in the Payton-John Stockton point guard matchup. For the first time since former Lakers great Magic Johnson was in his prime, Stockton was not the best point guard on the floor. Payton, capitalizing on a height advantage and superior quickness, stifled Stockton defensively and down-

ROCKY WIDNER

"The Pac-10 is about competitors, and the best players are going to go where there is strong competition."

—Seattle's Gary Payton

right abused him on offense.

Ultimately, Payton was acknowledged by the league as its Defensive Player of the Year. Meanwhile, Damon Stoudamire, the first-ever draft choice of the Toronto Raptors, won Rookie of the Year honors in a landslide.

What's the point?

Brandon (Oregon), Kidd (Cal), Payton (Oregon State) and Stoudamire (Arizona) all honed their skills in the Pacific-10, the collegiate conference out west generally ranked somewhere in the middle of those senseless "Best Conference" lists routinely tossed around by biased, boisterous television commentators. But when it comes to point guards, no conference can measure up to the Pac-10.

The above-mentioned quartet is the best of a current crop of point men from the Pac that also includes Clippers Pooh Richardson (UCLA), Darrick Martin (UCLA) and Brent Barry (Oregon State), New Jersey's Robert Pack (USC) and Khalid Reeves (Arizona), Phoenix's Kevin Johnson (Cal), and Sacramento's Tyus Edney (UCLA). In recent years, the Pac-10 has produced three All-Stars (Payton, Kidd and Johnson). Eight players currently start for NBA clubs, two (Stoudamire and Kidd) have been awarded Rookie of the Year, and eight are former first-round draft choices. Says Richardson, "Playing in the NBA sometimes is like playing in a conference game."

Why so many Pac-10 points in the NBA? Before we could begin our search for the truth, we had to ask another question: What does it take to play the position in the NBA?

MAKING THE POINT Gary Fitzsimmons, director of player personnel for Cleveland who drafted Kevin Johnson and Brandon, looks first to intangibles, like poise and leadership, then considers quickness and ball-handling skills. Fitzsimmons also covets a guy who can "protect the other players on the floor" by making sound decisions and distributing the ball to them in spots that maximize their effectiveness. Nobody does that better than Kidd.

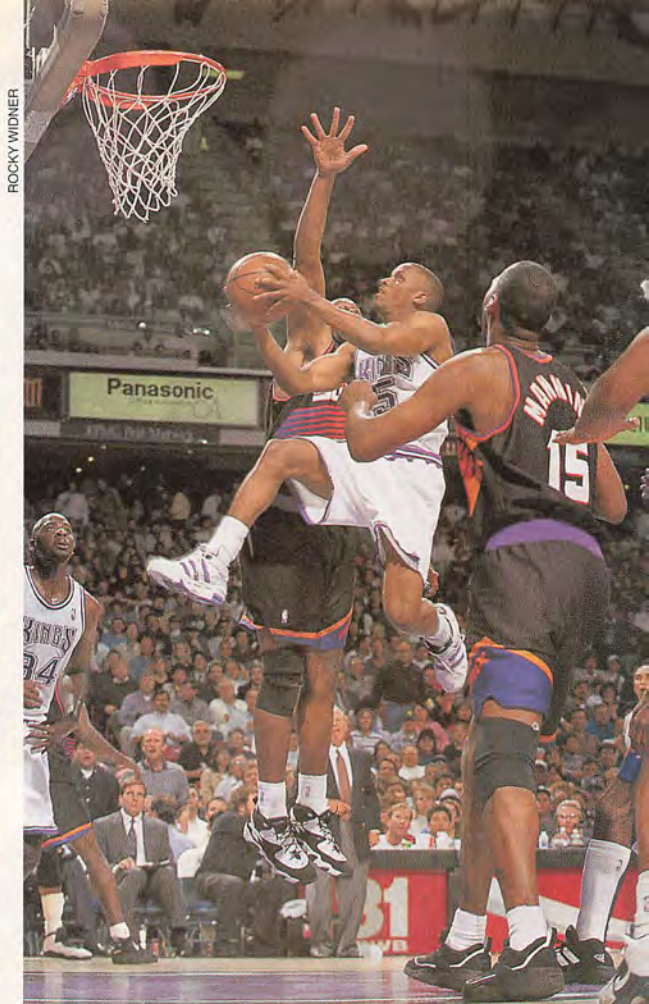
Scotty Stirling, scouting director for Sacramento, has been evaluating collegiate talent for more than 20 years. Two qualities he demands in a floor leader? The ability to beat his man off the dribble with either hand and penetrate. He also covets a player who can defend well on the ball. What a perfect description of Payton, and to a lesser degree Edney. In college, motion offenses and zone defenses can be used to protect players. But in the NBA, the ball is in the point guard's hands most of the time. If you can't handle and face up on D, you're toast, and so is your team.

STYLE POINTS You know the East likes to bang and the West has a reputation for being a little more wide open, right? But every team in the NBA will run if given the chance. Brandon loves to run and he runs the Cavs, who play in the East and like to walk. Fitzsimmons points to the lack of inside bangers in the Pac-10, but Stoudamire reminds us that during his first two years at Arizona, the Wildcats had big men up front and worked in the halfcourt most of the time. Besides, although it's true that most of the players we've mentioned meet the requirements advanced by NBA GMs, each plays the point position differently.

Says Stoudamire, "The only thing we have in common is that we're all successful."

Fitzsimmons' initial reaction was that the NBA emergence of Pac-10 guards was merely coincidence. But that was before we talked it out. "I think the characteristics that run through a lot of these guys is that they're able to handle the ball and push it, and all of them are outstanding athletes," Fitzsimmons says. "They're able to get themselves into areas on the court where they're most effective.... They understand how to get into the seams and how

KJ (right) paved the way for a host of great Pac-10 point guards now enjoying NBA success, including Edney (top).





ROCKY WIDNER

"Playing in the NBA sometimes is like playing in a conference game."

—The Clippers' Pooh Richardson

to make plays once there."

So, Damon, there is commonality. And there are contrasts. "They're obviously a little different in the sense that some can shoot the ball better from the floor [Stoudamire], others pass better [KJ and Kidd], and some excel at the defensive end, in penetrating and the open floor [Payton]," observes Fitzsimmons before casually making another key observation. "I think the transition for Pac-10 point guards to the NBA may be a bit easier. I think the thread that runs through them is that there isn't a great deal of difference between how the game is played in the Pac-10 compared to the NBA as far as the athleticism and quickness and the things you have to read defensively."

"You can play in a college backcourt and not be a great penetrator," says Stirling. "Teams play the passing game a lot. You don't see much man-to-man defense, so you can be a great player because there's no pressure on the ball. Also, you can be a successful point guard and not be a good defender because of the help defenses and zones. Randolph Childress [whom Detroit took in '95 with the 19th pick] was an outstanding point guard on a team that never pushed the ball [and had future All-America center Tim Duncan behind him on defense]."

And finally. To a greater degree, Pac-10 coaches allow youngsters to run the show. UCLA's Steve Lavin calls current point guard Cameron Dollar an extension of himself on the court, and Arizona's Lute Olson says success at that spot means running a ballclub, making sure other people do what you want. By allowing players the freedom to affect the outcome of games utilizing their individual skills and leadership qualities, coaches instill confidence, a critical element in building success in any endeavor.

THE COMPETITIVE EDGE It extends all the way down to the prep level, where the running game, keyed by penetration and passing, helps develop point guard skills. One NBA GM explains it this way: First, there are a couple metropolitan areas on the West Coast—L.A. and Oakland (both Kidd and Payton prepped in Oaktown)—where extremely competitive basketball is played, which creates an environment of mutual respect among players. "I've known Jason Kidd since he was young," says Payton, an Oakland native. "He's playing really well, he's coming into his own. It's good to play where you're free and can take a team into your own hands. He's responded very well."

"All of us played for great coaches in college, and we were great competitors," Payton adds, delivering the bottom line. "The Pac-10 is about competitors, and the best players are going to go where there is strong competition."

THE FUTURE Stanford's Brevin Knight may be the best college point guard in the country right now. He has both the physical necessities and intangibles to make the transition to the NBA.

Then there is the pedigree. The scouts and GMs we talked to obviously look to the individual first, but all agree that the success of prior Pac-10 points will help players like Knight. "The reason I came to the Pac-10 was mostly to play against the best point guards in the country," says Knight. "From Kidd, I learned to go out hard every minute of the game. When I came in, he was the best in the country, but he still played harder than everyone else. Edney was a great floor leader, he kept his team together. Stoudamire was a great player, not just a great point guard. He could do it all. If you needed points, he'd shoot the ball, but then he could lead a team by dishing off and making others better."

There seems to be no end to the talent. Says Arizona's Olson, "Knight is obviously the class of the point guards in the league right now, but I'd say that [the Wildcats'] Mike Bibby is the future. He's got everything: the work ethic to be the best, willingness to think pass first, yet he can score. The tradition of great point guards in this conference will continue." ★



BRUCE L. SCHWARTZMAN

Pooh (above) and his Pac-10 pals soon will be joined by Brevin Knight, who has what it takes to succeed in the NBA.



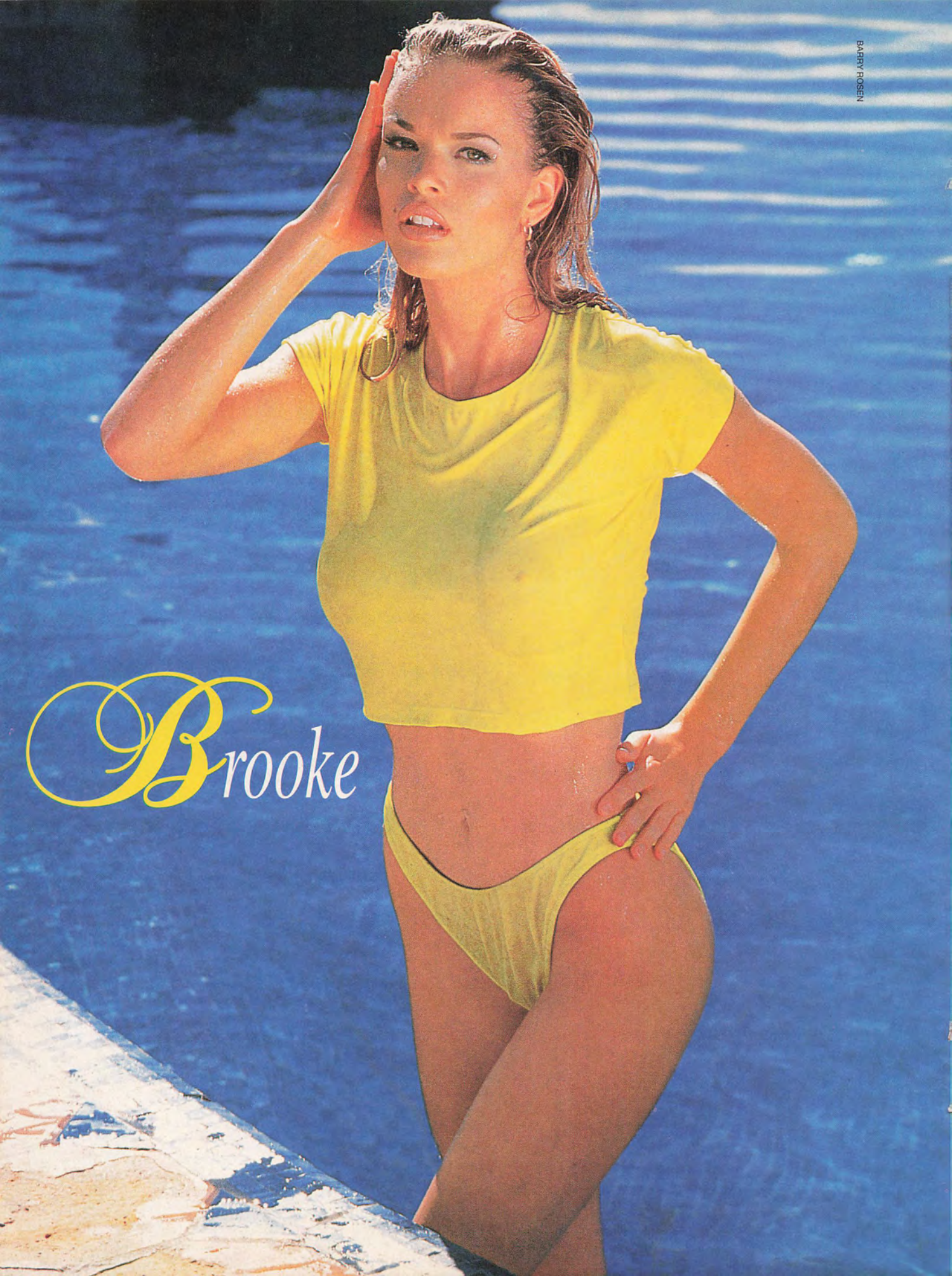
Wet & Wild

*Sensuous Sasha &
Friends Are Fit To Be Eyed*



Pasha

Brooke



A full-page photograph of a woman with voluminous, curly brown hair. She is wearing a two-piece bikini with a shimmering, sequined or beaded pattern. She is posed in profile, facing right, but her head is turned back to look over her shoulder at the camera. Her hands are raised behind her head. The background is a soft-focus view of a beach and the ocean during sunset or sunrise, with a warm, golden glow. The name 'Michelle' is written in a large, elegant, red script font on the right side of the image.

Michelle

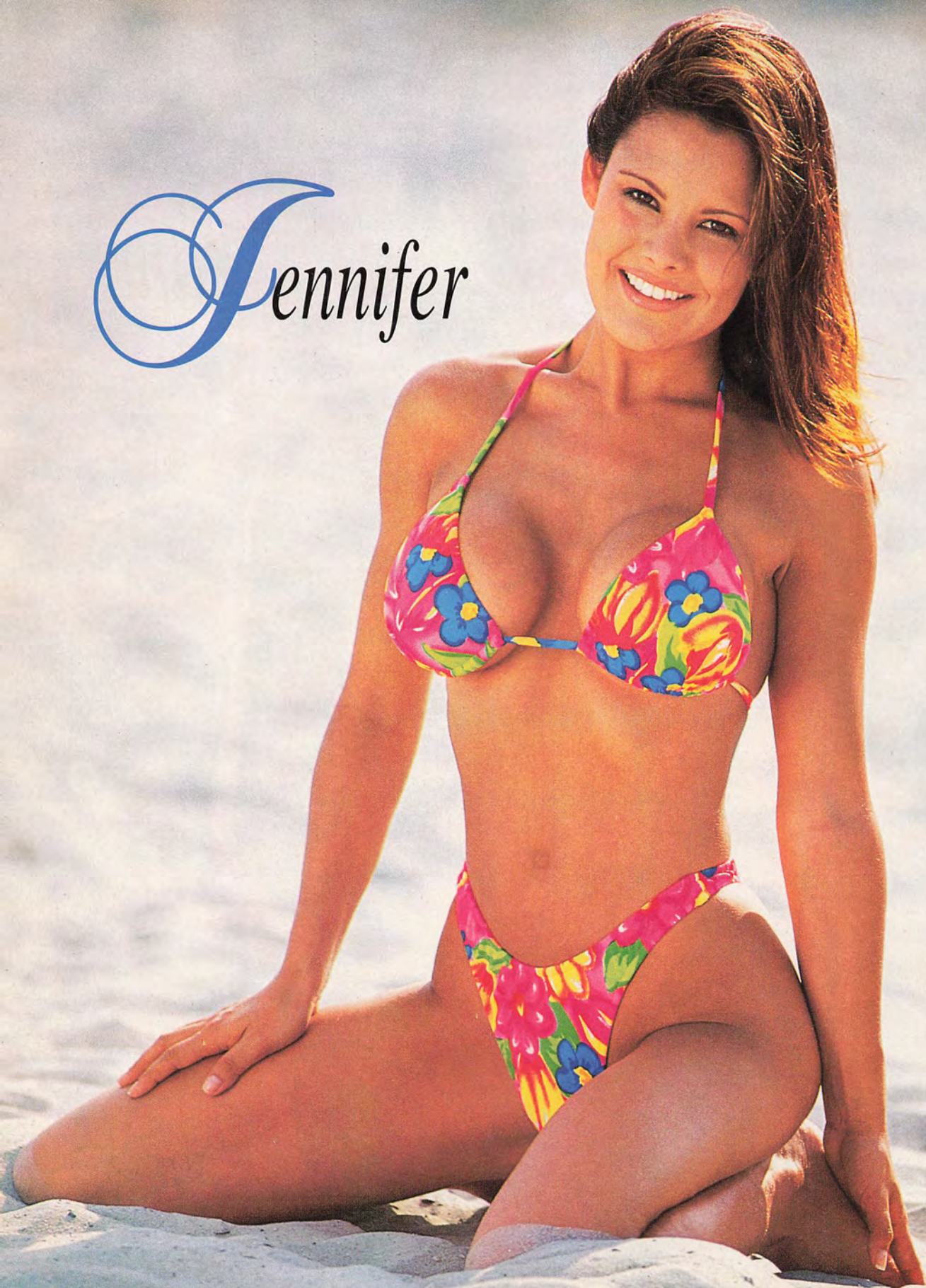


Siffany

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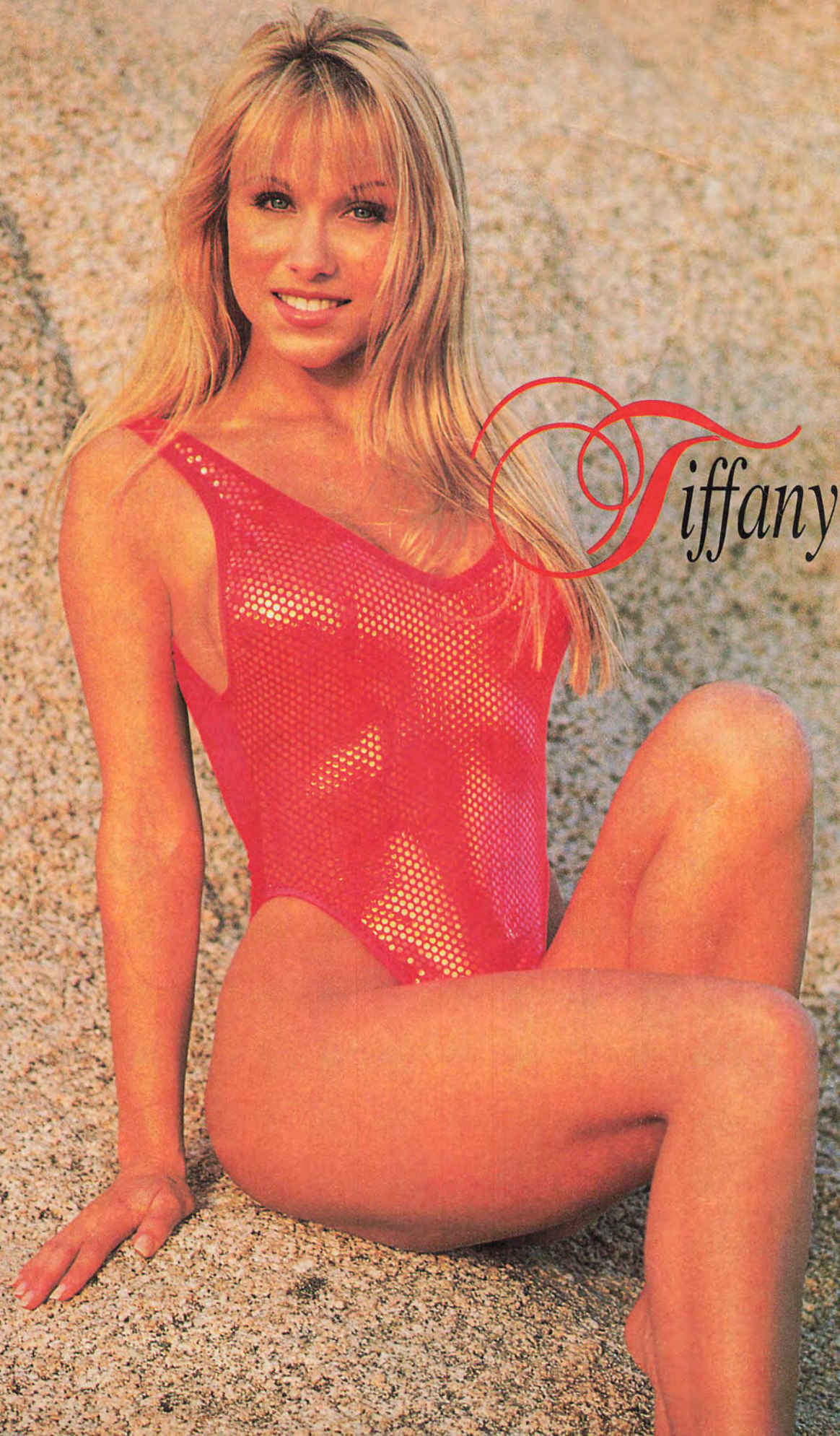
Vikki





Cindy

Lynn



Tiffany



Vickie

A photograph of a woman's legs sticking out of the ocean at sunset. The water is a deep, textured blue, and the sky is a lighter, hazy blue. The woman's legs are tanned and wet, with water droplets visible. She is wearing a red swimsuit, which is partially visible at the bottom right. The overall mood is serene and romantic.

Jennifer



*P*amela



A full-page photograph of a woman with long, wet, blonde hair, wearing a red and yellow patterned bikini. She is standing in an outdoor shower, with water spraying from a showerhead above her. She is leaning against a wooden wall with a metal railing, looking over her shoulder at the camera. The background shows green foliage and a wooden structure.

Cindy



A photograph of a person's legs and arms on a beach. The person is lying down, with their legs crossed and arms resting on their knees. The background shows the ocean with waves breaking. The name "Michelle" is written in a stylized, light blue font across the middle of the image.

Michelle



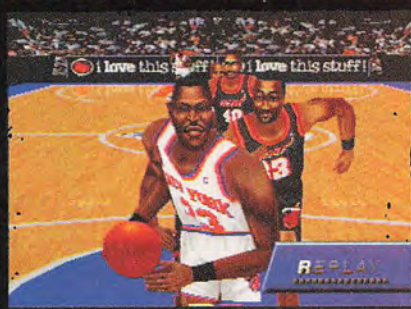
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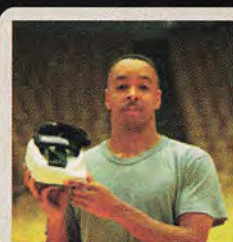
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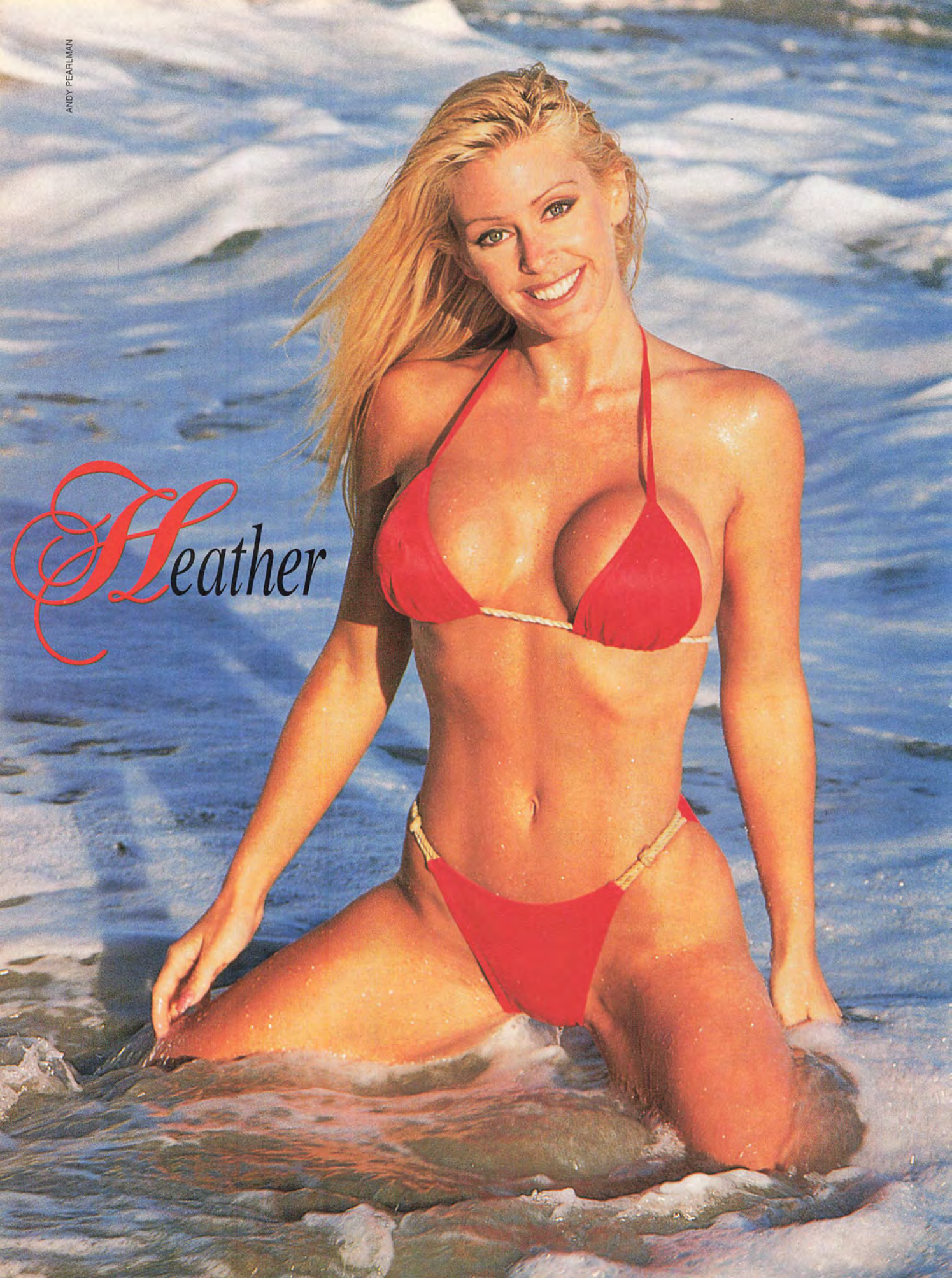
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Hotshot

Ray Allen

Ray Allen already can claim inestimable experience in two weighty components of life that are reality to an NBA rookie: travel and study. As a military dependent, Allen was exposed to life in England and Germany as well as California and Oklahoma before his family anchored in South Carolina. ("I had to adjust to different environments, different people in different parts of the country," he says.) And although he left the University of Connecticut one year prior to graduating, Allen attended on an academic scholarship and maintained a 3.6 GPA. He believes the orientation in each area will foster his overall basketball acumen.

"I learn a lesson every day playing basketball," says the 21-year-old shooting guard. "And as the games go by, I learn new things and tuck them into my game, and when that type of situation arises, I'll know how to approach it."

The 6-5, 205-pound Allen led UConn to three straight Sweet 16 appearances and averaged 23.4 points, 6.5 rebounds and 3.3 assists last year in being named Big East Player of the Year and an All-American. His likability and well-roundedness have endeared him to the NBA and fans in Milwaukee, and regularly have him compared to Detroit Pistons forward Grant Hill. The league, in fact, has chosen Allen as the spokesman for the All-Star weekend's rookie game.

A bit of a sponge on and off the court, Allen recalls that the lessons he now receives in NBA arenas were once accomplished on the playgrounds of Dalzell, S.C., with no counsel on hand but himself and a handful of peers.

"Coaches can't teach you how to put the ball in the hole," says Allen, initially picked by the Minnesota Timberwolves in last year's draft before being shipped to Milwaukee with a future first-round pick for Stephon Marbury. "They can teach you how to dribble with the right hand or left hand, teach you proper form. But they really can't teach you to look up into the rim and make it go down."

—Paul M. Johnson



JOHNSON

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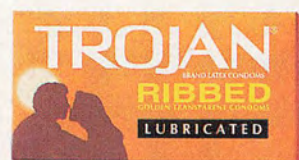
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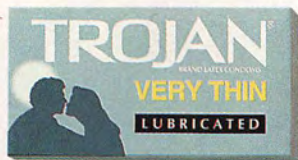
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Twice in the past four years, Florida Panthers goalie John Vanbiesbrouck has come close to winning the Stanley Cup and twice his hopes have been dashed.

"The Beezer," as he is affectionately known to teammates and fans, spent the first 12 years of his career in the New York Rangers' organization. But in the June prior to the Rangers' 1993-94 championship season that lifted a 54-year Stanley Cup curse, the former Vezina Trophy (for most outstanding goaltender) winner was spurned in favor of Mike Richter.

And while Vanbiesbrouck continued to enjoy personal success in Florida—he was a finalist for both the Hart (MVP) and Vezina trophies—it did little to ease the frustration of seeing his former teammates winning his Cup.

"There was good and bad with that whole situation," says Vanbiesbrouck. "I'd have to say that nobody has foresight—and that goes for myself and for the Rangers."

Rangers executives have since intimated the obvious—that letting Vanbiesbrouck go was a mistake. Beezer, however, says he never looked back on the trade that sent him to Vancouver for four days before he was picked first overall by Florida in the 1993 expansion draft.

"It was tough leaving the Rangers because it had been my home for more than a decade," says Vanbiesbrouck. "But I was open to anything. I got a lot of support from my family, and things down here have worked out better than I ever could have imagined."

What Vanbiesbrouck could not imagine was that in just three short years, he and the Panthers would be pitted against Patrick Roy and the Colorado Avalanche in the Stanley Cup Finals.

"We've been competitive every night from the very beginning, and that's

With All-Star John Vanbiesbrouck in Goal, the Panthers Appear Ready to Pounce on the Stanley Cup That Eluded Them in '96/By Greg Guss

BOB ROSATO

TOP CAT



what my focus was on," says Vanbiesbrouck, who led the expansion Panthers to within one point of the playoffs in their inaugural season. "I didn't want us to be the kind of team that was going to go out there and get trashed every night."

Three seasons later, the Panthers are the ones who are doing the trashing.

"This year, we believe we can go into every game and win," says Vanbiesbrouck, named October's NHL Player of the Month after leading the Panthers to a 7-0-3 start. "We're pretty well within our boundaries every night. We haven't been doing anything to shoot ourselves in the foot. Teams will have great shifts against us, but we haven't had a sustained slump."

With a microscopic goals-against average, Vanbiesbrouck, 33, is finally gaining the recognition and respect he so richly deserves. But Beezer would happily trade an All-Star appearance or any personal hardware for the chance to hold Lord Stanley's Cup as his own.

After a surprising third-place finish last year, the Panthers defeated, in succeeding order of difficulty, Boston, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh on their way to the 1996 Stanley Cup Finals.

It was only there that the young Panthers and Vanbiesbrouck met their match in the Avalanche and Roy. "Since it was our first playoffs as a franchise," explains Vanbiesbrouck, "we didn't really know what was going to happen. We had a great piece of adversity late in the season. After a pretty tough stretch of games where we were just floundering, we came through it and played very soundly during our last five games, and all of a sudden the playoffs were upon us."

In the playoffs, Vanbiesbrouck improved upon his regular-season 2.68 goals-against average with a sparkling 2.25. Like a thoroughbred champion, Vanbiesbrouck started all 22 playoff games, marking an incredible run that ended only after a franchise-record 55 saves in the decisive fourth game of the finals that Florida lost 1-0 in triple overtime.

"For me, it meant a certain amount of respect," says Vanbiesbrouck. "More so than that, it says that you had the leadership capabilities of not only wanting to be in that situation, but being successful in

The Rangers admit it was a mistake to let the Beezer get away, and now he's making 'em pay as perhaps the stingiest netminder in the game.

that situation. And even though we didn't win a game, we still earned a lot of respect. Within our game, respect means a lot. It means you can still hold your head high even though you're not holding that big trophy above your head."

Vanbiesbrouck has translated the disappointment of another Stanley Cup near-miss into motivation to create another opportunity. "It was a tough, tough go for us," Vanbiesbrouck concedes. "Colorado wore down our belief in ourselves and whether or not we could win. But there's no question we learned a lot and that we're more determined now than ever to get back there and win the Cup."

To do so, Vanbiesbrouck must confront the nightly spectre that all goaltenders face: the confidence demon. "There's always a struggle with negative thoughts out there, and that's just the nature of the beast," Vanbiesbrouck explains. "You try to be as positive as you can with yourself."

Over the course of his career, Vanbiesbrouck has developed a visualization process that has allowed him to achieve inner peace both on and off the ice. "I try to focus my attention on what I can do, not what somebody else is trying to do to me," says Vanbiesbrouck of his practical approach to hockey and life.

"Of all my personal goals, none of them have a statistic by them. My goals are to be the best person I can be for my teammates, the best husband I can be, the best father. Those are my goals. Those are real goals."

Ah yes, goals. For a netminder, the focus always seems to return to goals or, in Vanbiesbrouck's case, stopping them.

"This game can be very humbling," says Vanbiesbrouck. "Sometimes you think you have everything in perspective and you feel really good about yourself and you go out and get clobbered. I've been humbled too many times to think that I've got this game mastered." ★

TOM DIPACE



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Things have changed now. I own four homes in Southern California. The one I'm living in now in Bel Air is worth more than one million dollars. I own several cars, among them a Rolls Royce and a Mercedes Benz. Right now, I have a million dollar line of credit with the banks and have certificates of deposit at \$100,000 each in my bank in Beverly Hills.

Best of all, I have time to have fun. To be me. To do what I want. I work about 4 hours a day, the rest of the day, I do things that please me. Some days I go swimming and sailing—shopping. Other days, I play racquetball or tennis. Sometimes, frankly, I just lie out under the sun with a good book. I love to take long vacations. I just got back from a two week vacation from—Maui, Hawaii.

I'm not really trying to impress you with my wealth. All I'm trying to do here is to prove to you that if it wasn't because of that money secret I was lucky enough to find that day, I still would have been poor or maybe even bankrupt. It was only through this amazing money secret that I could pull myself out of debt and become wealthy. Who knows what would have happened to my family and me.

Knowing about this secret changed my life completely. It brought me wealth, happiness, and most important of all—peace of mind. This secret will change your life, too! It will give you everything you need and will solve all your money problems. Of course you don't have to take my word for it. You can try it for yourself. To see that you try this secret, I'm willing to give you \$20.00 in cash. (I'm giving my address at the bottom of this page.) I figure, if I spend \$20.00, I get your attention. And you will prove it to yourself this amazing money secret will work for you, too!

Why, you may ask, am I willing to share this secret with you? To make money? Hardly. First, I already have all the money and possessions I'll ever need. Second, my secret does not involve any sort of competition whatsoever. Third, nothing is more satisfying to me than sharing my secret only with those who realize a golden opportunity and get on it quickly.

This secret is incredibly simple. Anyone can use it. You can get started with practically no money at all and the risk is almost zero. You don't need special training or even a high school education. It doesn't matter how young or old you are and it will work for you at home or even while you are on vacation.

Let me tell you more about this fascinating money making secret:

With this secret the money can roll in fast. In some cases you may be able to cash in literally overnight. If you can follow simple instructions you can get started in a single afternoon and it is possible to have spendable money in your hands the very next morning. In fact, this just might be the fastest *legal* way to make money that has ever been invented!

This is a very safe way to get extra cash. It is practically risk free. It is not a dangerous gamble. Everything you do has already been tested and you can get started for less money than most people spend for a night on the town.

One of the nicest things about this whole idea is that you can do it at home in your spare time. You don't need equipment or an office. It doesn't matter where you live either. You can use this secret to make money if you live in a big city or on a farm or anywhere in between. A husband and wife team from New York used my secret, worked at home in their spare time, and made \$45,000 in one year.

This secret is simple. It would be hard to make a mistake if you tried. You don't need a college degree or even a high school education. All you need is a little common sense and the ability to follow simple, easy, step-by-step instructions. I personally know a man from New England who used this secret and made \$2 million in just 3 years.

You can use this secret to make money no matter how old or how young you may be. There is no physical labor

Here's what newspapers and magazines are saying about this incredible secret:

The Washington Times:

The Royal Road to Riches is paved with golden tips.

National Examiner:

John Wright has an excellent guide for achieving wealth in your spare time.

Income Opportunities:

The Royal Road to Riches is an invaluable guide for finding success in your own back yard.

News Tribune:

Wright's material is a MUST for anyone who contemplates making it as an independent entrepreneur.

Success:

John Wright believes in success, pure and simple.

Money Making Opportunities:

John Wright has a rare gift for helping people with no experience make lots of money. He's made many people wealthy.

California Political Week:

...The politics of high finance made easy.

The Tolucan:

You'll love...*The Royal Road to Riches*. It's filled with valuable information...only wish I'd known about it years ago!

Hollywood Citizen News:

He does more than give general ideas. He gives people a detailed A to Z plan to make big money.

The Desert Sun:

Wright's *Royal Road to Riches* lives up to its title in offering an uncomplicated path to financial success.

involved and everything is so easy it can be done whether you're a teenager or 90 years old. I know one woman who is over 65 and is making all the money she needs with this secret.

When you use this secret to make money you never have to try to convince anybody of anything. This has nothing to do with door-to-door selling, telephone solicitation, real estate or anything else that involves personal contact.

Everything about this idea is perfectly legal and honest. You will be proud of what you are doing and you will be providing a very valuable service.

It will only take you two hours to learn how to use this secret. After that everything is almost automatic. After you get started you can probably do everything that is necessary in three hours per week.

PROOF

I know you are skeptical. That simply shows your good business sense. Well, here is proof from people who have put this amazing secret into use and have gotten all the money they ever desired. Their initials have been used in order to protect their privacy, but I have full information and the actual proof of their success in my files.

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"All I can say—your plan is *great*! In just 8 weeks I took in over \$100,000. More money than I ever dreamed of making. At this rate, I honestly believe, I can make over a million dollars per year.

A. F., Providence, RI

'\$9,800 In 24 Hours'

"I didn't believe it when you said the secret could produce money the *next morning*. Boy, was I wrong, and you were right! I purchased your *Royal Road to Riches*. On the basis of your advice, \$9,800 poured in, in less than 24 hours! John, your secret is incredible!"

J. K., Laguna Hills, CA

'Made \$15,000 In 2 Months At 22'

"I was able to earn over \$15,000 with your plan—in just the past two months. As a 22 year old girl, I never thought that I'd ever be able to make as much money as fast as I've been able to do. I really do wish to thank you, with all of my heart."

Ms. E. L., Los Angeles, CA

'Made \$126,000 In 3 Months'

"For years, I passed up all the plans that promised to make me rich. Probably I am lucky I did—but I am even

more lucky that I took the time to send for your material. It changed my whole life. Thanks to you, I made \$126,000 in 3 months."

S. W., Plainfield, IN

'Made \$203,000 In 8 Months'

"I never believed those success stories...never believed I would be one of them...using your techniques, in just 8 months, I made over \$203,000...made over \$20,000 more in the last 22 days! Not just well prepared but simple, easy, fast...John, thank you for your *Royal Road to Riches*!"

C. M., Los Angeles, CA

'\$500,000 In Six Months'

"I'm amazed at my success! By using your secret I made \$500,000 in six months. That's more than twenty times what I've made in any single year before! I've never made so much money in such short time with minimum effort. My whole life I was waiting for this amazing miracle! Thank you, John Wright."

R. S., Mclean, VA

As you can tell by now I have come across something pretty good. I believe I have discovered the sweetest little money-making secret you could ever imagine. Remember—I guarantee it.

Most of the time, it takes big money to make money. This is an exception. With this secret you can start in your spare time with almost nothing. But of course you don't have to start small or stay small. You can go as fast and as far as you wish. The size of your profits is totally up to you. I can't guarantee how much you will make with this secret but I can tell you this—so far this amazing money producing secret makes the profits from most other ideas look like peanuts!

Now at last, I've completely explained this remarkable secret in a special money making plan. I call it "The Royal Road to Riches". Some call it a miracle. You'll probably call it "The Secret of Riches". You will learn everything you need to know step-by-step. So you too can put this amazing money making secret to work for you and make all the money you need.

To prove this secret will solve all your money problems, don't send me any money, *instead postdate* your check for a month and a half from today. I guarantee not to deposit it for 45 days. I won't cash your check for 45 days before I know for sure that you are completely satisfied with my material.

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There is no way you can lose. You either solve all your money problems with this secret (in just 30 days) or you get your money back *plus \$20.00 in cash FREE!*

Do you realize what this means? You can put my simple secret into use. Be able to solve all your money problems. And if for any reason whatsoever you are not 100% satisfied after using the secret for 30 days, you may return my material. And then I will not only return your original UNCASHED CHECK, but I will also send you an extra \$20.00 *cashiers check* just for giving the secret an honest try according to the simple instructions.

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"As Mr. John Wright's accountant, I certify that his assets exceed one million dollars." Mark Davis

Hotshot

Any fan of Bradley University basketball will tell you Anthony Parker can shoot, and a school-record 166 career three-pointers through his junior season provided

testament. But he might have to be the one to acquaint the average fan to his other basketball singularities.

"I think one of my major contributions is my versatility and that I can provide an all-around game," says Parker, named to last year's All-Missouri Valley Conference defensive team. "It gives me the ability to contribute to my team in any particular game, whether it be scoring or rebounding or defense."

A vintage Parker box score—like the one from the 1996 first-round NCAA tournament loss to Stanford that read 34 points (on 8 of 10 three-pointers), 10 rebounds, two assists and two blocks—reveals a matchless all-around game. Still, the 21-year-old senior favors the fine feel of a smooth jumper.

"It feels great," says Parker, who averaged 18.9 points, 6.5 rebounds and 3.5 assists a game last season in winning conference Player of the Year honors and leading the Braves to the MVC championship and the NCAA tournament. "You just want to get the ball and have another opportunity. You can't wait until another window opens where you can fire it up and, as soon as you let it go, know it's going into the basket and you can start trotting down the court. It's one of the best feelings in the world."

Parker will share that feeling this year with NBA scouts, many of whom were introduced to Parker's game by means of fortuitous scheduling: As a sophomore, Parker scored 29 while playing against a heavily watched Brent Barry; as a junior, he lit up Georgia Tech and Stephon Marbury for 30 points, seven rebounds, five assists and four steals.

"During those games, I didn't know there were any scouts there," says the 6-6, 205-pound senior, ranked by most at the top of the 2-guard crop. "I guess the hard work is starting to pay off."

—Paul M. Johnson

Anthony Parker

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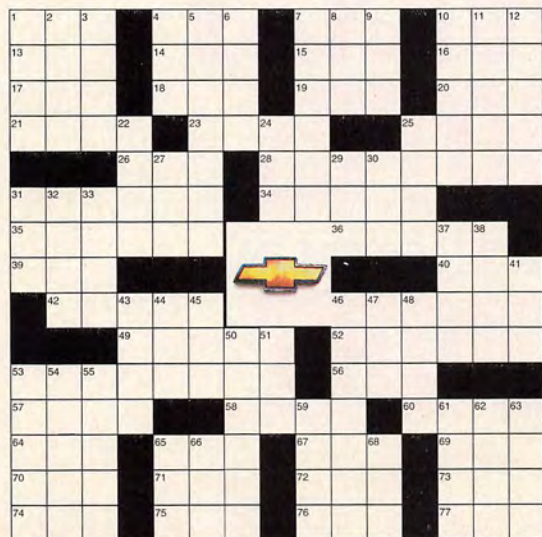
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The Chevrolet Truck Across

SPORT word

Puzzle

By Stanley Newman



Across

1. Florida track racer
4. Nolan Ryan, as a rookie
7. '60s outfielder Davalillo
10. Urban vehicle
13. '70s Tigers utility man Brown
14. Bugner beater in '75
15. Make a wild peg
16. For each side
17. Shade tree
18. Roush of Cooperstown
19. Thumbs-down vote
20. Belle stat
21. Short race
23. NBA MVP in '70
25. ___ alone (solo): 2 wds.
26. Yale athlete
28. AL MVP in '96
31. Jersey, for instance
34. Stable worker
35. Who the Pirates got for Rhoden
36. Red Sox Hall of Fame second baseman
39. Eligible for Old Timers' Day: abbr.
40. Seattle Slew snack
42. First name of a wide receiver-turned-broadcaster
46. Tennis Hall of Famer
49. Tag out a base runner
52. "Mr. Bowling"
53. Emulate Tarkenton
56. 42 Across' school: abbr.
57. Espo's first name
58. NL Manager of the Year in '94
60. Paige's Negro League roommate
64. Stimp's pal
65. Teammate of Pee Wee and Jackie
67. Junk-baller Miller
69. Easy fly ball
70. League-leader page abbreviation
71. Hockey shutout box score
72. "___ Misérables"
73. Boxer, for short
74. Cobb's namesakes
75. Brooklyn Dodger, affectionately
76. Kind of poem
77. Stubbard ___ mule: 2 wds.

Down

1. Was left on base
2. Billy Sims' school: abbr.
3. Great fielding plays
4. Fannie ___ (mortgage agency)
5. Tiger Woods' real first name
6. Tidewater player
7. Ballpark employee
8. Author Levin
9. Umpire's shout
10. '60s Olympics skater Heiss
11. Diminutive outfielder Pearson
12. Quarterback's headache
22. Cornerback Adderley
24. Goose ___ (shutout inning)
25. Hockey or handball
27. Golf-ball position
29. Get the ___ (be selected to play)
30. "The Bronx ___" (Sparky Lyle book)
31. First-pitch thrower of the '30s: abbr.
32. Free throw ___
33. Shower alternative
37. Lopsided win
38. Like tripe plays
41. ___ Heels (North Carolina)
43. "The ___ Ticket" (Carl Hubbell)
44. Throwing ability
45. Bit of hair cream
46. Checked out prospects
47. Something covered by a batting helmet
48. Only pro boxer to defeat Gene Tunney
50. Winter Olympics event
51. Snake-like fish
53. Nursery-rhyme dieter
54. "THE MOST DEPENDABLE, LONGEST-LASTING TRUCKS"
55. Wrestling places
59. '52 Winter Olympics city
61. Hall of Fame pitcher Rixey
62. Groza and Carnesecca
63. Laura Davies' organization: abbr.
65. Sailor
66. Promissory note
68. Put in the game

See page 64 for Chevrolet Truck SPORTword Puzzle answers.

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Tony Dorsett -\$45
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Marshall Faulk -\$40
Brett Favre -\$50
Jim Harbaugh -\$35
Michael Irvin -\$45
Greg Lloyd -\$35
Howie Long -\$45
Dan Marino -\$55
Joe Montana -\$75
Warren Moon -\$40
Herman Moore -\$35
Joe Namath -\$65
Walter Payton -\$55
Jerry Rice -\$55
Barry Sanders -\$45
Deion Sanders -\$45
Junior Seau -\$40

Emmitt Smith -\$50
Roger Staubach -\$55
Kordell Stewart -\$35
Lawrence Taylor -\$50
Derrick Thomas -\$40
Ricky Watters -\$35
Reggie White -\$45
Rod Woodson -\$45
Steve Young -\$50

Baseball

Hank Aaron -\$50
Barry Bonds -\$45
Joe Dimaggio -\$150
Ken Griffey Jr. -\$45
Derek Jeter -\$30
Greg Maddux -\$45
Mickey Mantle -\$125
Don Mattingly -\$50
Willie Mays -\$40
Mike Piazza -\$40
Cal Ripken Jr. -\$50
Alex Rodriguez -\$35
Nolan Ryan -\$55
Frank Thomas -\$45
Ted Williams -\$110

Basketball

Charles Barkley -\$65
Larry Bird -\$75
Clyde Drexler -\$45
Julius Erving -\$65
Patrick Ewing -\$50
Anfernee Hardaway -\$50
Grant Hill -\$55
Kareem Abdul Jabbar -\$55
Magic Johnson -\$95
Michael Jordan -\$150
Shawn Kemp -\$45
Jason Kidd -\$45
Karl Malone -\$45
Jamal Mashburn -\$40
Reggie Miller -\$45
Alonzo Mourning -\$45
Hakeem Olajuwon -\$55
Shaquille O'Neal -\$95
Gary Payton -\$30
Scottie Pippen -\$50
David Robinson -\$45
Dennis Rodman -\$45
Jerry Stackhouse -\$40
John Stockton -\$45
Damon Stoudamire -\$45

Other Sports

Andre Agassi -\$55
Muhammed Ali -\$75
Dale Earnhardt -\$55
Steffi Graf -\$50
Wayne Gretzky -\$65
Jaromir Jagr -\$35
Mario Lemieux -\$55
Eric Lindros -\$45
Mark Messier -\$60
Jack Nicklaus -\$65
Arnold Palmer -\$65
Patrick Roy -\$40
Gabriella Sabatini -\$50
Pete Sampras -\$55
Monica Seles -\$50
Mike Tyson -\$75
Tiger Woods -\$35

Swimsuit Models

Pam Anderson -\$65
Cindy Crawford -\$75
Kathy Ireland -\$65
Elle Macpherson -\$55
Claudia Schiffer -\$60
Niki Taylor -\$55



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DICK VITALE'S NCAA TOURNEY NOTES

NEXT MONTH IN

SPORT

batter up

AARON'S HEIRS—It's been nearly 23 years since Hank Aaron eclipsed Babe Ruth's career home run record,

once thought to be unbreakable. Aaron, who retired in 1976, wound up with an amazing 755 dingers. We asked him about the current crop of sluggers and their chances of dethroning him as home run king. Aaron, who pulls no punches, thinks his title is safe.

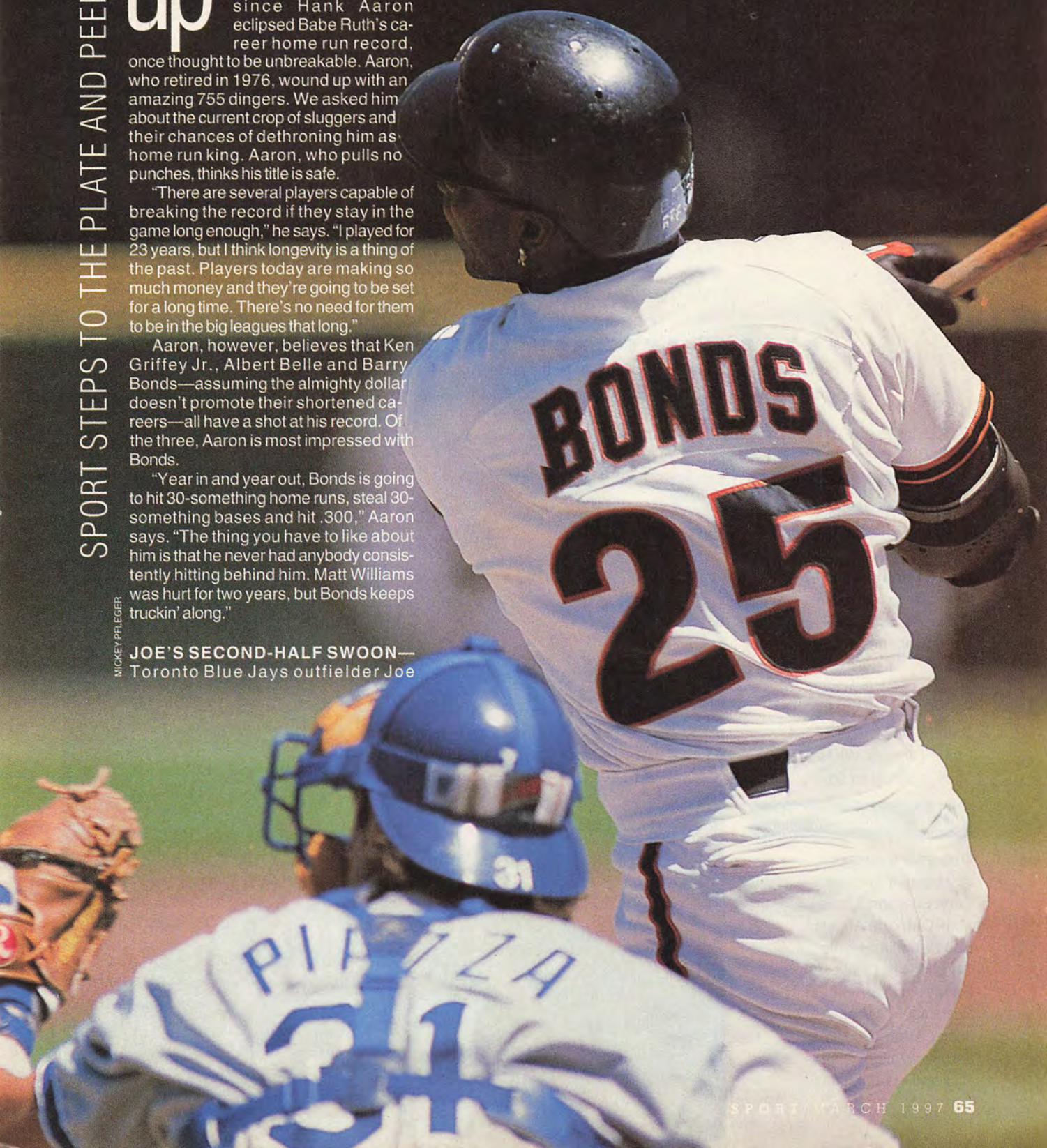
"There are several players capable of breaking the record if they stay in the game long enough," he says. "I played for 23 years, but I think longevity is a thing of the past. Players today are making so much money and they're going to be set for a long time. There's no need for them to be in the big leagues that long."

Aaron, however, believes that Ken Griffey Jr., Albert Belle and Barry Bonds—assuming the almighty dollar doesn't promote their shortened careers—all have a shot at his record. Of the three, Aaron is most impressed with Bonds.

"Year in and year out, Bonds is going to hit 30-something home runs, steal 30-something bases and hit .300," Aaron says. "The thing you have to like about him is that he never had anybody consistently hitting behind him. Matt Williams was hurt for two years, but Bonds keeps truckin' along."

JOE'S SECOND-HALF SWOON—Toronto Blue Jays outfielder Joe

MICKEY PFELEGER



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 Your_{coach} wants you to **GO** play Ball_{at the} junior
 Your high school guidance

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ALL-TED WILLIAMS TEAM

They can hit a ton but can't field:

Carlos Baerga, Mets
 Albert Belle, White Sox
 Rickey Henderson, Padres
 Gregg Jefferies, Phillies
 Jeff Kent, Giants
 Ryan Klesko, Braves
 Mike Piazza, Dodgers
 Sammy Sosa, Cubs
 Frank Thomas, White Sox
 Mo Vaughn, Red Sox

ALL-JOE CHARBONEAU TEAM

One-year wonders:

Jeff Blauser, Braves
 Scott Erickson, Orioles
 Mark Gubicza, Angels
 Bob Hamelin, Royals
 Chris Hoiles, Orioles
 Danny Jackson, Cardinals
 Pat Listach, Astros
 John Olerud, Blue Jays
 Jerome Walton, Orioles
 Rick Wilkins, Giants



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Carter has been one of the better run producers in recent years, averaging 107 RBI in the 1990s. But the 36-year-old has shown a disturbing trend during his six seasons in Toronto. During the first two months, Carter has hit a solid .297. But then he seems to run out of gas and has hit .245 the rest of the year. So what's the deal?

"At the beginning of the season, it's like, put your stat up," Carter says. "Everybody is off to a fresh start. But during July, August, September and October, they don't pitch to me as much as they pitch to someone else. They're not going to let me beat them. Plus, I become impatient at times. You want to do a lot even though they aren't giving you pitches to hit. This year, I'm hoping to work on that."

In an attempt to prevent another second-half swoon, the Blue Jays are considering putting Carter at first base, where he could conserve some energy.

"The Blue Jays probably feel that Joe's years as an outfielder are behind

him," says Jerry Howarth, the Blue Jays' play-by-play broadcaster. "Joe is a well-conditioned athlete, but he's getting up in years. He'll be 37 in March. I think playing first base will help his legs, his stamina and probably iron out that second-half average. I'm sure Joe was bothered by that as well. He wouldn't admit that, but he wants to make sure that's not repeated."

OUR TWO CENTS—Why is it that after a runner steals a base, the TV camera invariably pans to the catcher, when in most cases the runner steals off the pitcher? ... Our all-'90s team: 1B—Frank Thomas; 2B—Roberto Alomar; SS—Cal Ripken Jr.; 3B—Matt Williams; LF—Barry Bonds; CF—Ken Griffey Jr.; RF—Albert Belle; C—Mike Piazza; SP—Greg Maddux; RP—Dennis Eckersley; Mgr.—Bobby Cox ... Imagine if Mark McGwire hadn't missed all those games. At age 33, he'd have 400 career homers. Instead, he goes into the '97 season with 329, which, of course, isn't bad ... The most underrated baseball analyst is ESPN's Dave Campbell. He's always insightful and gives great statistical information. The most overrated analyst is Fox's Tim McCarver. How many times do we have to hear that the outfielders are playing too deep? ... Baseball's Hall of Fame has wings for beat writers, broadcasters and the women's baseball league. What about a wing for great pinch-hitters? It would be great to see players like Manny Mota and Jose Morales

ALL-DON MATTINGLY TEAM

Onetime potential Hall of Famers whose careers have unraveled:

Steve Avery, free agent
Jose Canseco, Red Sox
Will Clark, Rangers
Doug Drabek, free agent
Dwight Gooden, Yankees
Wally Joyner, Padres
David Justice, Braves
Bret Saberhagen, Red Sox
Ruben Sierra, Reds
Darryl Strawberry, Yankees

ALL-WILLIE MAYS TEAM

They can do it all—hit, field, run:

Brady Anderson, Orioles
Craig Biggio, Astros
Barry Bonds, Giants
Brian Jordan, Cardinals
Ken Griffey Jr., Mariners
Marquis Grissom, Braves
Barry Larkin, Reds
Kenny Lofton, Indians
Alex Rodriguez, Mariners
Bernie Williams, Yankees

Joe Carter's sweet swing tends to sour late in the season: In his six years with the Jays, he's hit .297 in the first two months, .245 after.

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ALL-PETE ROSE TEAM

**Former players who deserve
to be in the Hall of Fame:**

Orlando Cepeda

Gil Hodges

Roger Maris

Thurman Munson

Phil Niekro

Tony Perez

Jim Rice

Pete Rose

Ron Santo

Don Sutton

ALL-DAVE KINGMAN TEAM

**Sluggers who strike out too
much:**

Jay Buhner, Mariners

Andres Galarraga, Rockies

Todd Hundley, Mets

Ryan Klesko, Braves

Dean Palmer, Rangers

Sammy Sosa, Cubs

Henry Rodriguez, Expos

Mickey Tettleton, Rangers

Jim Thome, Indians

Mo Vaughn, Red Sox

ALL-DON DRYSDALE TEAM

**Hurlers who aren't afraid to
pitch inside:**

Roger Clemens, Blue Jays

Juan Guzman, Blue Jays

Randy Johnson, Mariners

Pedro Martinez, Expos

Jack McDowell, Indians

Mike Mussina, Orioles

Troy Percival, Angels

Mariano Rivera, Yankees

Curt Schilling, Phillies

Mark Wohlers, Braves

ALL-DERREL THOMAS TEAM

**They play more than one
position:**

Rich Amaral, Mariners

Mariano Duncan, Yankees

Chad Fonville, Dodgers

Rex Hudler, Angels

Stan Javier, Giants

Jim Leyritz, Angels

Mark McLemore, Rangers

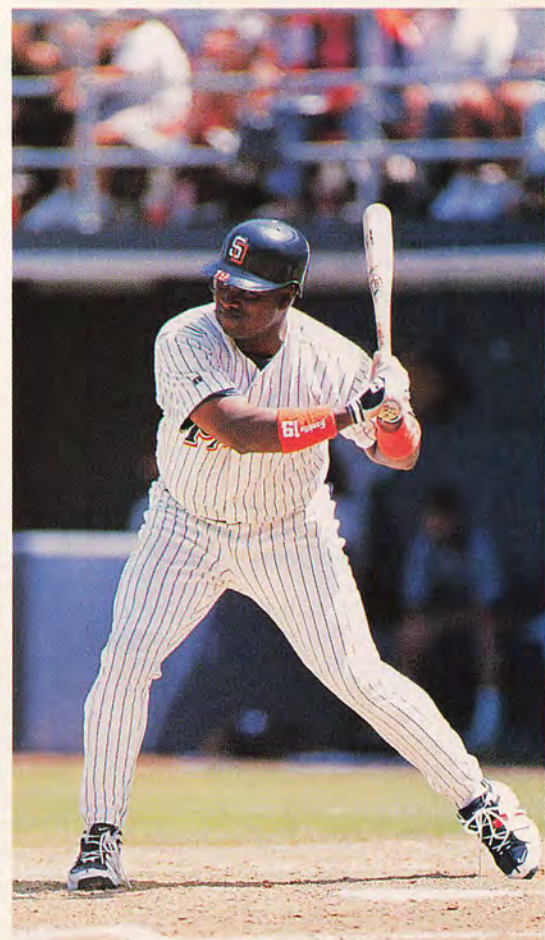
Tony Phillips, White Sox

Bip Roberts, Royals

B.J. Surhoff, Orioles



MIKEY PLEDGER



GREG BANNER

rewarded for the great job they did coming off the bench for so many years ... Thumbs up to the baseball voters who didn't award the Cy Young to New York Yankees ace Andy Pettitte. Granted, he led the American League in wins with 21, but it would have been a crime to see a pitcher win it with an ERA close to 4.00 ... For once, we would love to see Tony Gwynn drive in 100 runs instead of winning another batting title. Historically, batting titles have not translated into championships. Of the 72 champs since 1960, only Tommy Davis (1963), Frank Robinson (1966) and John Olerud (1993) have won batting titles and the World Series in the same season, whereas RBI kings have been on seven World Series winners ... Andruw Jones is getting the hype, but another player to watch this season is St. Louis Cardinals first baseman Dmitri Young, who hit a two-run, pinch-hit triple against the Atlanta Braves in Game 4 of the '96 NLCS. Young will get a chance to start this season, with John Mabry moving to the outfield. "Dmitri is a guy with pop from both sides of the plate," says Joe Buck, the play-by-play voice of the Cardinals and Fox Baseball. "He's a very good hitter for average and drives in runs. Though he's a big guy, he's not slow, by any means. He gets around the bases very well." ... Doesn't Benito Santiago look 41 instead of 31? ... The Dodgers haven't had a quality second baseman since Steve Sax—at least, one they've held on to. Two former Dodger second basemen enjoyed quality seasons with other teams in '96. Eric Young had 184 hits and finished sixth in the league in batting (.324) for the Colorado Rockies, and versatile Jose Vizcaino hit a solid .297 and helped the Cleveland Indians win their second consecutive division title. At least L.A. is learning from its mistakes: Delino DeShields was moved this off-season to make room for rookie phenom Wilton Guerrero. ★

McGwire's (top) career slugging totals would be downright scary were he not so injury-prone; Gwynn would help his team by sacrificing average for more production.

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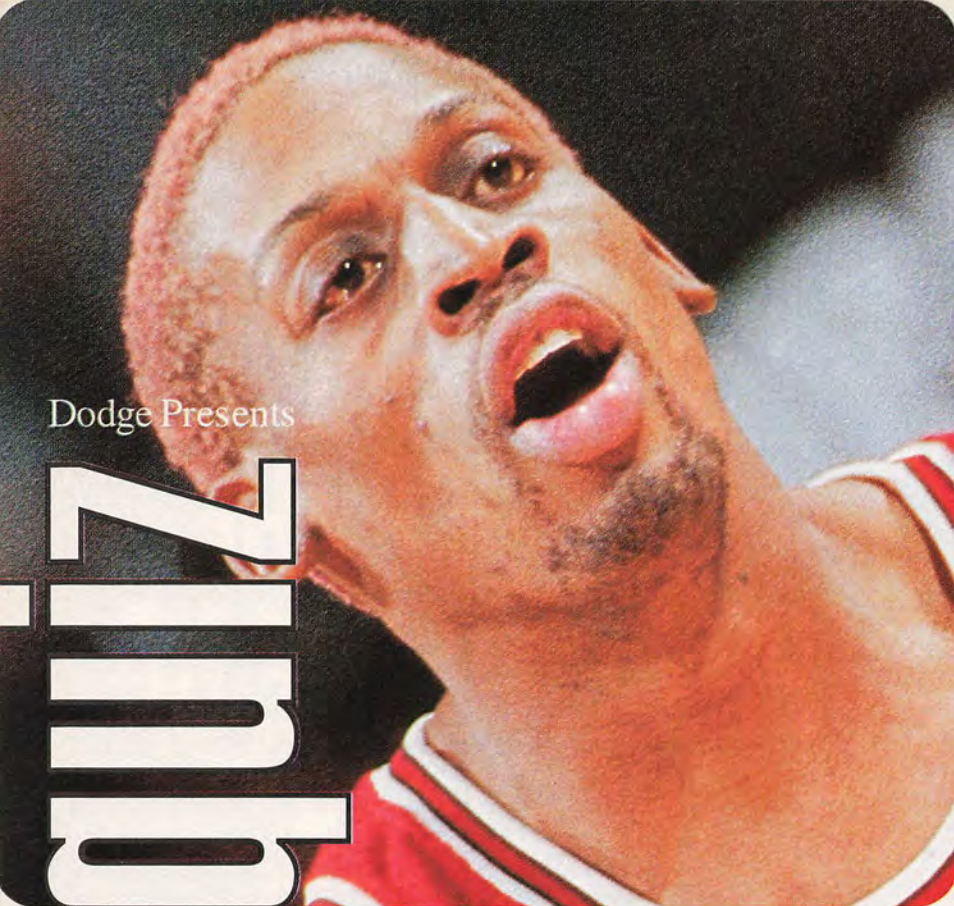
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TOM D'PACE

Dodge Presents

Sports Quiz

- 1 Dennis Rodman (pictured) is one of three power forwards to have won an NBA rebounding title since 1980. Name the others.
- 2 Which NBA player holds the rookie record for most minutes played in a season?
A. Damon Stoudamire B. Elvin Hayes
C. Kareem Abdul-Jabbar D. Kevin Garnett
- 3 Which active NBA player has the most career offensive rebounds?
A. Buck Williams B. Robert Parish
C. Karl Malone D. Kevin Willis
- 4 Match the player with his first NBA team.
A. Rod Strickland 1. Celtics
B. Brian Shaw 2. Knicks
C. John Starks 3. Kings
D. Kenny Smith 4. Warriors
- 5 Name the only player to record a triple-double in his first NBA game.
- 6 Three active NBA coaches have guided college teams to the NCAA Final Four. Name them.
- 7 Name the only two players in Detroit Red Wings history to score 500 career goals.
- 8 Name the only team in NHL history to have 11 different players score at least 20 goals in the same season.

9

Last season, five NHL teams advanced to the playoffs despite having records below .500. Name them.

10

Who was Joe Frazier's last opponent in the boxing ring?

- A. George Foreman B. Jerry Quarry
C. Jimmy Ellis D. Floyd Cummings

11

In 1973, Ken Norton won the NABF heavyweight title against which fighter?

- A. George Foreman B. Muhammad Ali
C. Gerry Cooney D. Leon Spinks

12

Name the last golfer to win two major tournaments in one year.

13

Name the first horse to win the triple crown.

—William Ladson

STUMPER Name the only NBA player to win a rebounding title with three different teams.

FEB. '97 STUMPER ANSWER John Havlicek (Name the only member of the Boston Celtics to score 40 points in an NBA Finals game.)

THIS MONTH'S QUIZ ANSWERS

11. B. 12. Nick Price (1994) 13. Sir Barton (1919)
Maple Leafs, Blues, Jets, Flames and Canucks 10. D
and Steve Yzerman 8. Boston Bruins (1977-78) 9.
P.J. Carlesimo and John Calipari 7. Gordie Howe
B-1, C-4 and D-3. 5. Oscar Robertson 6. Larry Brown.
1. Michael Cage and Charles Barkley 2. B 3. B 4. A-2.

Check the answers for your score, and rate yourself as follows: 12-13 correct: **Sports genius** 9-11 correct: **Good fan** 6-8 correct: **Working too hard** 3-5 correct: **To the showers** 0-2 correct: **Try knitting**



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GOLFING

TRENDS

NOTES FROM THE TOUR

Boralyn Clubs,
Titanium Balls
and More Tiger
Tales/By Ed Kiersh

Goodbye to Titanium—Mark O'Meara and Tom Lehman may soon have to shelve their Taylor Made titanium clubs and prepare for golf's next revolutionary piece of clubhouse hardware. Boralyn is coming with a vengeance. Billed as lighter and stronger than titanium, this metal matrix "wonder composite" (a mix of aluminum and boron carbide) was recently tested—and given positive reviews by Freddie Couples. But Lynx (Couples' company) and the Alyn Corporation, the firm with the boralyn patent, had a nasty falling out. And now Taylor Made has agreed to buy \$40 million worth of Alyn's boralyn clubs, if they meet certain specifications. That's a big if, as even Taylor Made president George Montgomery admits. "Boralyn still has to prove it's industrializable," he says. Yet now, given \$40 million of new credibility, the once-unknown Alyn company already has opened a production facility and is promising to make the golf world forget titanium in 1997, what its hypemeisters are calling "the Year of Boralyn."

Jordan's Dilemma—Winning NBA championships and living close to Wilson's golf R&D facility in Rosemont, Ill., Michael Jordan has long been the happy camper. To get new clubs, or to have his grips adjusted, he simply needed to visit that facility, and the staff was always eager to advise him on his golfing problems. ("Like anyone else, Michael is constantly asking how to solve his putting woes and stay in the fairway on his 290-

yard drives," says Wilson's expert club designer, Robert Mendralla Sr.) But now Jordan faces a difficult choice. Having long played John Daly's favorite ball, the Wilson Ultra 500, Jordan now must decide whether he's going the high-tech route with the company's "world's first titanium-core ball" (newly launched in three versions—"distance," "spin" and "balata") or stick with the 500, a ball that's been one of the longest on the tour. Daly has told company officials, "I can't wait to hit this ball." So the in-house betting at Wilson is that His Airness will follow Daly's lead by switching to titanium—and spray even longer drives farther from the fairway.

In the Rough—In his short pro golf career, \$60 million man Tiger Woods already has stirred the public's imagination with his Nike and Titleist endorsements, superb play and vault toward Ryder Cup Team membership. Yet Woods hasn't been totally embraced by other tour players, primarily because of the attention that's been showered upon him, and because he's already committed a few gaffes. One of those very public mistakes occurred during last September's Buick Challenge when Woods not only pulled out of the event but was a no-show at a VIP dinner honoring him as College Player of the Year. "While his management firm [IMG] could've jetted him in and out, Woods essentially snubbed over 200 VIPs," complains a golf agent. "Sure, other tour players are jealous of him. But he's also messing up, like the whole Nike approach of exploit-

ing the race issue, and this dinner snub. Tiger just doesn't look all that clean anymore. He's tripped up."

Tiger's Problems II—Though "tired" and choosing to skip tour events, the 20-year-old Woods tried to enter an Illinois casino between rounds of the Quad City Classic and was barred entrance at the front door. The security people were told, "He's Tiger Woods, the new king of golf." Yet only viewing him as underaged, those guards told Woods' entourage, "We wouldn't care if he was the Lion King."

Mano a Mano—It didn't make any headlines last fall, but when Corey Pavin grew disgusted with Cleveland Golf's contract offers and decided to "test the [endorsement] waters," he immediately was locked in battle with Nick Price at the negotiating table. Goldwin Golf, a club manufacturer suddenly looking to land marquee players to promote its artillery, made offers to both golfers. The 1995 U.S. Open winner and an American crowd favorite, Pavin was going to be a rich man no matter which company signed him. Yet Price's future was anything but secure. Stumbling off the leaderboard these past few years and recently aligned with companies that failed financially, he had seen his market value tumble and was in the embarrassing position of searching for any kind of deal. "Once companies would jump through hoops to get a Nick Price," says one club manufacturer. "But now Nick is the one doing the jumping."

BRIAN TIRPAK

HOW DO YOU LIKE YOUR EGGS?





GOLFING TRENDS

Sweeten Your Putting Stroke/ By Steve Stricker

Too many guys make the same mistake on the putting green. They take their eyes off the ball, look toward the hole a little too quickly, and that all-too often results in an off-line shot. The pros call this "coming off the putt." It's a killer, a sure way to putt balls off to the right and mess up your score.

I've had this problem, most notably at the President's Cup last year, when I putted so terribly that Corey Pavin came up to me and said: "Steve, you're looking up way too fast. Relax, guy. Keep those eyes down, watch the club make contact with the ball."

That's the key. Watch that contact, even if you do it to an extreme the way Nick Faldo does. He sometimes keeps his head down for so long, the ball is five

feet from his putter when he finally looks up. What incredible concentration! He doesn't move his eyes off the spot where the ball was. That allows him to correctly follow through on his putts.

One great drill in working on this kind of concentration is to put a coin down down alongside your ball and stroke several putts. Keep your eye glued to that coin so that you have something more to look at than just the grass. I've tried this approach several times, and you don't realize how fast your eyes want to move to watch the ball. But focusing on that coin keeps your head still and prevents your shoulders, or body, from moving up and out from a putt.

Otherwise, once you come off a putt

you tend to decelerate at impact, and that never allows the clubhead to get back to square. It leaves the clubface open, and that sends the ball to the right. Another missed putt!

But if you calm down and keep your head down, you're much more likely to hit that straight-line putt. For if that clubhead is square at impact, the contact will be far more solid, resulting in a truer roll. More often than not,

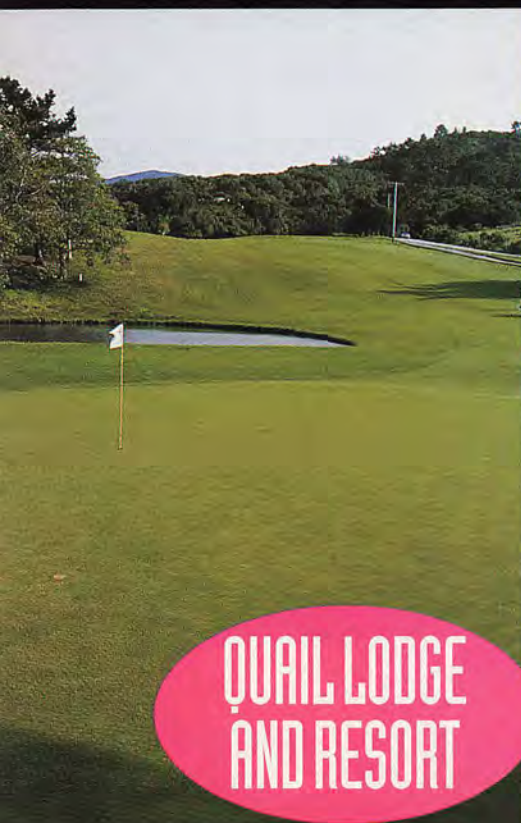
you'll hit the ball with that sweet spot on the putter—and that's what golf is about: finding that sweet spot. It'll sweeten your score.

A silky-smooth putter with power to match, Steve Stricker earned more than \$1 million last year and has emerged as one of the tour's rising young stars.



MITCHELL HAUDAD

TIP OF THE MONTH



QUAIL LODGE AND RESORT

MIKE KLEME/GOLFOTO

GOLF DESTINATION

Golfers are all-too familiar with sand and water, the game's traditional headaches, the bugaboos that give us visions of Freddie Kruger.

But at the Quail Lodge Resort and Golf Club in Carmel Valley, Calif., only minutes from Pebble Beach and Monterey, there's added trouble confronting would-be par busters.

One errant shot on this oak-studded, 6,141-yard course, and your ball comes to rest amid a pack of squawking wild turkey and quail. The feathers fly. The chirps and croaks are a nonstop sere-nade. So be advised. Don't recklessly go looking for birdies.

Just keep your ball down the middle on this Robert Muir Graves-designed course, the site of numerous amateur tournaments, and this veritable wildlife preserve won't conjure up scenes from Alfred Hitchcock's *The Birds*.

Dotted with 10 lakes, tall willow trees

and dozens of deep sprawling bunkers, the course is still dangerous, however. Many of the holes are severely sloped, and since most of the play is into strong prevailing winds, reaching uphill greens is often a matter of playing one to two clubs more than normal.

Golfers easily at times can feel they're on a roller coaster, lurching between the 189-yard downhill fifth hole and the uphill, dauntingly narrow 509-yard 15th. Yet if that proves too harrowing, other thrill rides are also possible while staying at this Mobil 5 Star resort.

Those inviting excursions include Clint Eastwood's stomping grounds in nearby Carmel and Pebble Beach's famed 17 Mile Drive.

(The Quail Lodge Resort and Golf Club offers specially priced three- and four-day packages. Call 1-800-538-9516 for further information.)

—Ed Kiersh



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GOLFING TRENDS

Taking 15 Advil a day to ease the intense pain of a torn rotator cuff, Mark McCumber "sucked it up" and went about his business. He shot the hell out of the Royal Lytham and St. Annes Golf Club in England and finished second in last year's British Open.

"It was all mental. I got into the spirit of things and just had some fun," says McCumber, modestly downplaying one of golf's most impressive—and overlooked—achievements in 1996. "It was no big deal. I got into the atmosphere. To come within a whisker of winning, my hanging out in pubs obviously paid dividends."

The gutsy McCumber played hurt for almost two full seasons. Earning about \$1 million during that span, this 18-year tour veteran chuckles, "I was doing OK; there was no reason to worry about the pain."

Eventually, however, his discomfort grew intolerable. Forced to have surgery last summer, he's now approaching 1997 as his comeback year, a time to improve on his 10 tour victories and more than \$5 million in earnings.

"I'm not playing for the money, not at all," insists Mc-



MITCHELL HADDAD

Callaway's Great Big Bertha (Titanium) Driver



Some golf club manufacturing companies are destined to be leaders, others followers. Rarely does the intriguing paradoxical situation arise in which one company fits both bills. Callaway Golf, the most successful golf club manufacturer in the history of the game, is that rare exception.

Callaway introduced the first oversized driver in 1991 called Big Bertha, which became somewhat of a household name. Quickly, each club maker followed the leader with an oversized stainless steel metal driver of its own. As dynamic an organization as Callaway is (under the charismatic leadership, of course, of its founder and namesake, Ely Callaway), the company couldn't rest on its laurels. Rather, it had to follow the tremendous innova-

tive breakthrough the Big Bertha represented by introducing yet another industry-leading club.

Enter the Great Big Bertha, introduced in January 1995, the first successful titanium-headed driver in America. Thus, Callaway followed the lead of its first innovation with one of greater magnitude, and in so doing set off the trend of titanium mania that has yet to reach its stride.

One more thing: The Great Big Bertha driver came with a then-astronomical-sounding \$500 price tag, eliciting cries of "Who would ever pay that much for a driver?" The answer was lots of people, once they saw that the club delivered superior performance. Again, other companies followed suit, to the point that a \$400 ti-

Mark McCumber

No Major Obsession/ By Ed Kiersh

Cumber, a resident of Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla. "I just love being in the thick of competition, contending, feeling that heat. It's a rush for me that I terribly missed while I was recuperating from my surgery."

Yet despite this passion for the game, felt ever since his teen-age days on public courses in Jacksonville, there's still that nagging, and sometimes

disheartening, "within a whisker" factor.

McCumber came tantalizingly close to winning the British—but in a way that only added to his frustration. He's never won a major, and in golf, rightly or wrongly, world-beating champions are measured by their triumphs in those marquee events.

"Sure, I'd love to win a major, but it's never been a burning passion, and it won't really change things for me if I don't win one," says McCumber, who despite his failures in these tournaments has long been one of the Sony rankings' top 20 players internationally.

"It's OK if the monkey is still on my back," he says. "Winning a major has never been an obsession for me. I'm grateful for what golf has given me. I take a great sense of accomplishment from my 10 wins, playing in the Ryder Cup [1989], and I'm confident I can still contend. I'll stop playing when I can't."

At 45, though, the genial, never-boastful McCumber is also a realist. With such heavy-hitting youngbloods as Tiger Woods, Phil Mickelson and

Steve Stricker beginning to monopolize the spotlight, he's already thinking of another course of action.

"Designing courses, non-gimmicky layouts the average guy can play, is a lot of fun," says McCumber, who has designed or redesigned 45 courses around the world, including the much-acclaimed Osprey Cove in St. Mary's, Ga. I'm not into fads, the bulk-heading, all that Pete Dye stuff. I just like tradition."

Yet McCumber, a self-admitted "creature of habit," has exchanged his old persimmon driver for "newfangled" titanium artillery, and he's confident his switch will give him a few more years on top the leaderboard.

"It wasn't easy adjusting to this Invox driver, especially with all my buddies joking, 'Mark, you're not any longer [off the tee] than you were,' " laughs McCumber. "But now that I've gone the titanium route, been coerced to finally catch up with the past, I'm looking forward to 1997. It'll be great to win again." ★



tanium driver sounded alluringly inexpensive.

The advantages of titanium have been well-documented. Suffice to say that the material is 60 percent stronger yet 40 percent lighter than stainless, which has enabled Callaway engineers and designers, under the leadership of Richard C. Helmstetter, to design a clubhead that not only provides more forgiveness on less-than-centered hits, but boasts a larger effective hitting area, otherwise known as the "sweet spot."

Like the original Big Bertha driver, Callaway at first marketed the Great Big Bertha to higher-handicapped, less-skilled golfers. It didn't take long, however, for even the tour pros to understand that a golf ball doesn't know whether it's been struck by Jack Nicklaus or Nick Jacklaus. In other words, before long, some of the game's biggest names—the Senior PGA Tour money leader, Jim Colbert, the young LPGA phenomenon Annika Sorenstam, and Jim Furyk, a rising star on the PGA Tour—decided to get every extra yard and fairway hit that leading-edge technology had to offer, and they all put Great Big Berthas in their bags.

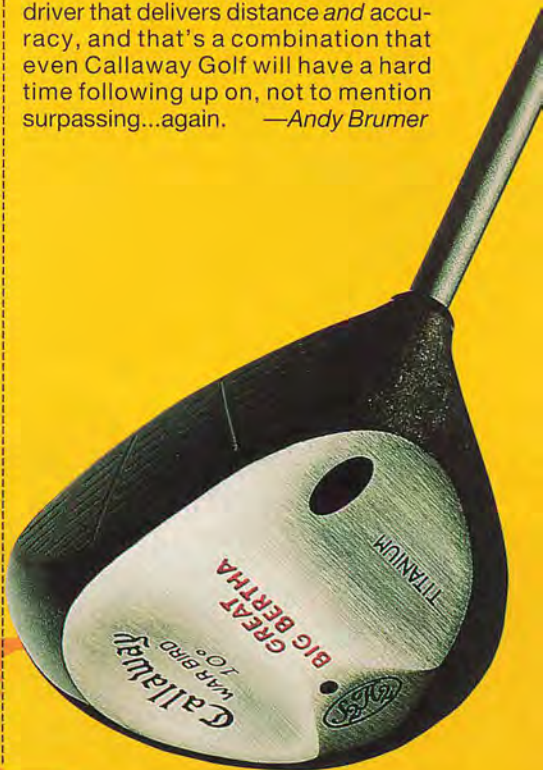
Actually, the defining characteristic

of the original Big Bertha driver hasn't changed. The Great Big Bertha still sports the once-unusual but now quite familiar-looking "bore-through" no-neck hosel design, which the company says delivers maximum weight to the hitting area. This particular feature on the smaller-headed Big Bertha driver promised solid feel, a performance premium even more important on the bigger-headed Great Big Bertha, simply because the larger titanium clubhead requires added stability at impact to yield the clean, crisp sense of contact so pleasing to golfers.

Indeed, the club delivers a wonderfully solid sensation, as well as a fantastically dramatic and explosive crashing sound at impact that makes players feel they've cracked one a mile down the fairway even before they look up to see where their ball actually went. Research has indicated that, to a large extent, the sound of a club hitting a ball is what golfers instinctively translate into descriptions of how a club feels to them. Furthermore, the Great Big Bertha proves extremely responsive and easy to maneuver. Hitting the ball high, low, right-to-left and/or left-to-right has proven virtually as simple as with those relics of yesteryear, the

persimmon drivers, known for their "workability."

Put it all together and you have a driver that delivers distance and accuracy, and that's a combination that even Callaway Golf will have a hard time following up on, not to mention surpassing...again. —Andy Brumer



motor sports

LADY IN LEATHER Angel on a Pro Stock Motorcycle/By Rick Voegelin

The first time I saw Angelle Seeling ride a Pro Stock Motorcycle, I didn't see her at all. From my vantage point at the end of the quarter-mile drag strip, her bike appeared to be riderless as it rocketed toward the finish line at 180 mph.

Tucked in tightly behind the bike's fairing to minimize wind resistance, the 5-1, 98-pound rider had become virtually invisible. Six-time NHRA motorcycle champion Dave Schultz calls the technique "getting into the paint." Angelle Seeling was tucked in so tightly she was under the paint.

Motorsports and horse racing may be the only pro sports in which a jockey-sized female can compete with—and beat—the big boys. The adamantly feminine Angelle ("That's French for 'angel,'" she reminds an interviewer in a Louisiana accent laced with Cajun spice) is in the vanguard of a woman's movement that is revolutionizing motorcycle drag racing.

A petite former beauty queen whose résumé includes a runner-up finish in the Louisiana Fur and Wildlife Festival Pageant, Seeling works as a registered nurse in an intensive care unit in her day job. On weekends, she trades her nurse's

uniform for purple-and-pink leathers and a carbon fiber helmet.

The 26-year-old rookie utterly dominated the NHRA Keystone Nationals in Reading, Pa., in only her fourth appearance on the pro circuit. She qualified

No. 1, set a national elapsed-time record at 7.373 seconds—the quickest quarter-mile in the history of Pro Stock Bike racing—and became the first woman to win on a two-wheeler in NHRA's premier motorcycle class.

The novelty of her accomplishments in a predominantly male sport was a siren's song for the media.

Profiles in *USA Today* and *People*, along with spots on national TV ranging from ESPN to the morning talk shows, propelled her from obscurity to celebrity.

But like most overnight sensations, Seeling had paid her dues in anonymity for years. She climbed on a motocross bike at age 6 and competed against her male playmates until the gender gap in physical strength became apparent. Concerned that their daughter was displaying tomboy tendencies, Seeling's parents encouraged her to channel her competitive instincts in-

to the equally cutthroat world of beauty pageants.

Between talent shows and nursing classes, Angelle continued to ride motorcycles for recreation. "My mother used to wash the mud off me with a garden hose after I rode my dirt bike," Seeling remembers.

Angelle's racing career was on indefinite hold, but she steadfastly refused to surrender her dream. She scrimped to save tuition money for a drag racing school where she could learn the fundamentals of riding a Pro Stock motorcycle, a nasty 260-horsepower missile that accelerates to 100 mph in two seconds flat.

Angelle's coach and mentor was bearded George Bryce III, the mastermind behind the Star Performance Parts team that propelled rider John Myers to three NHRA championships. "She walked up to me and said, 'I'm going to drive a Pro Stock bike,'" Bryce recalls. "She wasn't wearing makeup and hadn't done her hair. She wanted me to see her as a person, not as an attractive young woman. As soon as I saw her ride, I knew she was a natural."

Bryce also saw Angelle's diminutive size and steely determination as two competitive advantages for his team. While her male rivals starve to meet the 600-pound maximum weight for bike and rider, Angelle enjoys the luxury of 60 pounds of strategically placed lead ballast bolted to her motorcycle's steel frame. Under Bryce's tutelage, Seeling soon mastered the harrowing art of steering a motorcycle at high speed by literally hanging off the side of her bike.

Seeling also learned the downside of fame. Two weeks after her groundbreaking victory, she found herself in a firestorm of controversy when she refused to oppose her teammate Myers in the final round of a race in Kansas. Her decision boosted Myers' chances of winning a hard-fought championship battle with longtime rival Dave Schultz, but drew the fire of irate officials.

"I owed it to the team," Seeling said in her defense. "The championship was on the line, and I could repay John for his help."

Angelle Seeling may be small in stature, but she has a big heart—and an even bigger future. ★



JON ASHER (2)

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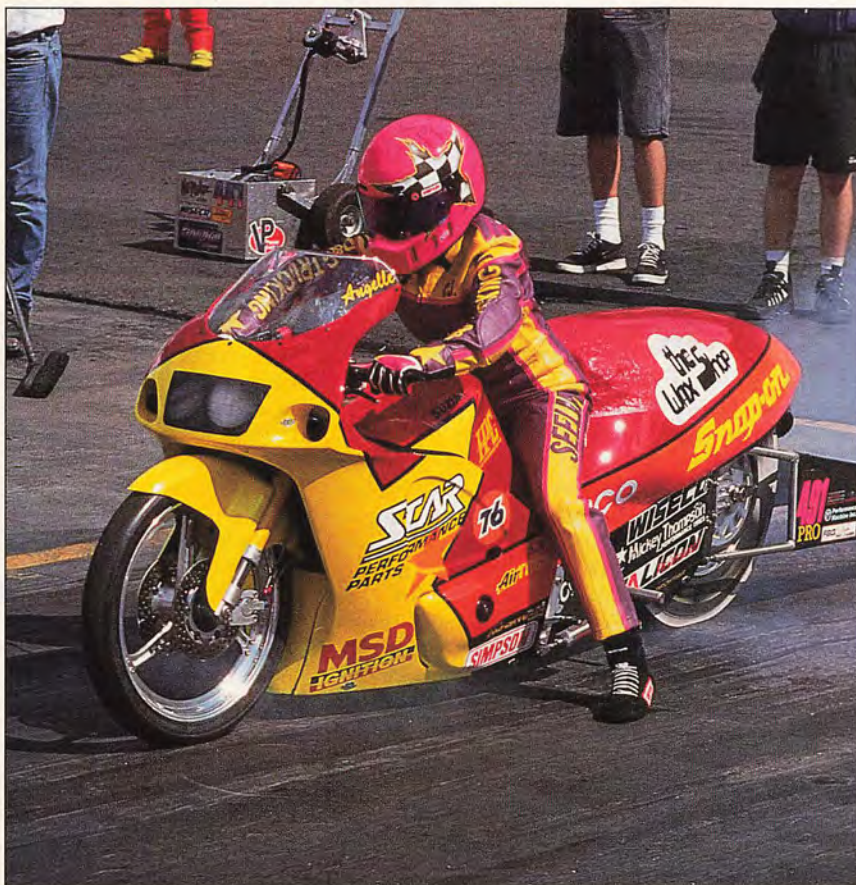
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JON ASHER (2)

In a predominantly male sport, Seelie's diminutive size and steely determination have worked to her advantage.

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times...—Charles Dickens.

I don't suppose the author was talking about the demise of the Boston Celtics, but he could've been.

To know my history, I ought to be doing a jig over the woebegone Celtics, passing out carnations, pirouetting down the street. So why am I so blue over the

collapse of the green?

I used to be hard-core, face paint, lucky shirt, the whole deal. A decade ago, compassion for the Celtics was unthinkable. I had zits I felt more compassion for.

No, I had the Lakers, the most beautiful basketball team ever made. But it's not enough to have a side. You need an adversary, a target, and in haughty old Boston, a no more conducive target

wouldn't call it grieving, but neither is it delight. OK, here goes: I need Boston—the good Boston, not this pile. Look at them. The other day their box score listed two guys with names that seem lifted right out of the glossary from *Clockwork Orange*—

Szabo and Driggers. Szabo translates as schlepper.

Boy, if I don't miss McHale. You try cursing Todd Day.

And look who's done it to 'em—M.L. Carr! The towel-waver guy! One of their own! This is where I can say with relish, serves 'em right. Carr couldn't lead

salmon upstream. He's made botch after botch, behaving more like a sugar daddy than a general manager. He's paralyzed the club by signing such lackluster talents as Greg Minor, Pervis Ellison, Rick Fox and Dee Brown to lengthy contracts, jammed the salary cap with stupefyingly rich deals for Dana Barros and Dominique Wilkins. When none of that worked, he made himself head coach. Having Carr run the Celtics calls up comedian Dennis Miller's take on Dan Tanna's nebbishy assistant Binzer from the old TV show "Vega\$." Something like, you let him play with the power windows, but you don't let him drive the car. Carr is Boston's Fredo Corleone. They should've offed him when they had the chance.

You may like this new NBA, where there are no teams but two, Nike and Reebok. No thanks. Take them and the Dream Team and give back the Celtics. Who is there to revile now? The Bulls? Can't—Jordan. Too universal. The Rockets? How does one get worked up over Mario Elie?

There's only one guy who can power-lift the Celtics back to their feet, make them worthy of loathing again: Larry Bird. He's got the history; he's got the substance; he's got the name. When they give you that job, Larry Joe, you take it. Who'll be pulling for you the hardest? Ha! Me! ★

STEVE LIPKOVSKY (2)

Get Smart

...about the Boston Celtics

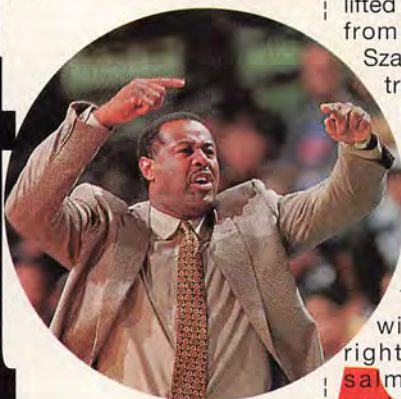
By Jeff Weinstock

was there ever. It was gold vs. green, fire vs. ice, West vs. East. No, that's not it. That's not it at all. It was Magic vs. Bird, right vs. wrong. The light vs. the darkness.

I listened to Pat Riley charge conspiracy when fire alarms went off in the Lakers' Boston hotel in the predawn before a championship game, and I was with Pat. When Magic Johnson eased his epic junior skyhook over McHale and Robert Parish in '87, I whooped down the block in stocking feet, roaring door to door. Ding dong, the wicked witch is dead!

So it just doesn't figure that I would grieve over Boston's current indigence. I

Then, it was sporty to say one hated the Celtics, but respected them. Forget that. I hated Boston, and that was all. I would have sooner rooted for Libya. I hated that sniveling twerp Danny Ainge, that stumpy sneak Red Auerbach, that sun-famished yokel Larry Bird. Kevin McHale? Don't get me started.



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sport**facts**

Noteworthy Numbers and Stat Oddities/By Dan Gordon



Entering 1996-97, number of teams with a winning record against the Bulls over the previous five seasons: 0

Most wins against Chicago from 1991-92 through 1995-96: 11 (by Cleveland, against 12 losses)

NBA first-overall picks who went their entire careers without playing in an All-Star game: 3 (Kent Benson, LaRue Martin, Mychal Thompson)

Active first-overalls who hadn't been selected All-Stars entering this season: 5 (1989 top selection Pervis Ellison and the past four No. 1's—Chris Webber, Glenn Robinson, Joe Smith and Allen Iverson)

Rookies of the Year who called it a career before becoming All-Stars: 4 (Darrell Griffith, Phil Ford, Ernie DiGregorio and Don Meineke)

Active Rookies of the Year who hadn't made the All-Star team entering this season: 3 (Damon Stoudamire, Webber and Chuck Person)

Former North Carolina players on 1996-97 NBA preseason rosters, the most of any school: 12

Schools with 10 former players in the league: 2 (Arizona, Georgia Tech)

With 9: 2 (Alabama, Georgetown)

With 8: 2 (Michigan, UCLA)

Number of homers new White Sox teammates Albert Belle and Frank Thomas combined to hit last season: 88

Most combined homers in a season by two players on the same team: 115 (Roger Maris and Mickey Mantle, 1961 Yankees)

Number hit by Orioles sluggers Brady Anderson and Rafael Palmiero in 1996: 89

Consecutive years in which Frank Thomas has registered a .300 batting average, 20 homers, 100 RBI, 100 runs and 100 walks, a major-league record: 6

Number of players who have knocked in 100 runs in their first six full seasons: 5 (Al Simmons, Hal Trosky, Joe DiMaggio, Ted Williams and Thomas)

Years since it had been done before Thomas: 49 (Williams)

Most seasons with 100 or more RBI to start a career: 11 (Simmons)

Number of homers Brady Anderson had

hit in his eight-year career prior to 1996, when he blasted 50: 72

Anderson's at-bats-per-homer ratio before 1996: 45.4

In 1996: 11.6

In the four years that Tom Glavine, Greg Maddux and John Smoltz have pitched together for the Braves, number of starts they have missed due to injury: 3

Longest current string of seasons out of the NBA playoffs: 8 (Washington)

Longest current string of seasons in the playoffs: 14 (Portland)

Number of teams that have been in the playoffs each of the past 12 seasons: 3 (Portland, Utah and Chicago)

Number of times the Trail Blazers have failed to qualify for the postseason since winning their lone NBA title in 1976-77: 1

Number of teams, other than Portland, that have missed the playoffs only once in the past 20 years: 1 (L.A. Lakers)

Consecutive seasons in which Dennis Rodman has led the NBA in rebound average, entering this year: 5

Most consecutive rebound titles in NBA history: 5 (Rodman and Moses Malone)

Consecutive years in which Karl Malone has led Utah in scoring after failing to do so in his rookie season: 10

Age of Lakers' Kobe Bryant when L.A. won its most recent title, the fifth of the Magic Johnson era, in 1988: 9 ★

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